SpaceGamer FantasyGamer

Number 81
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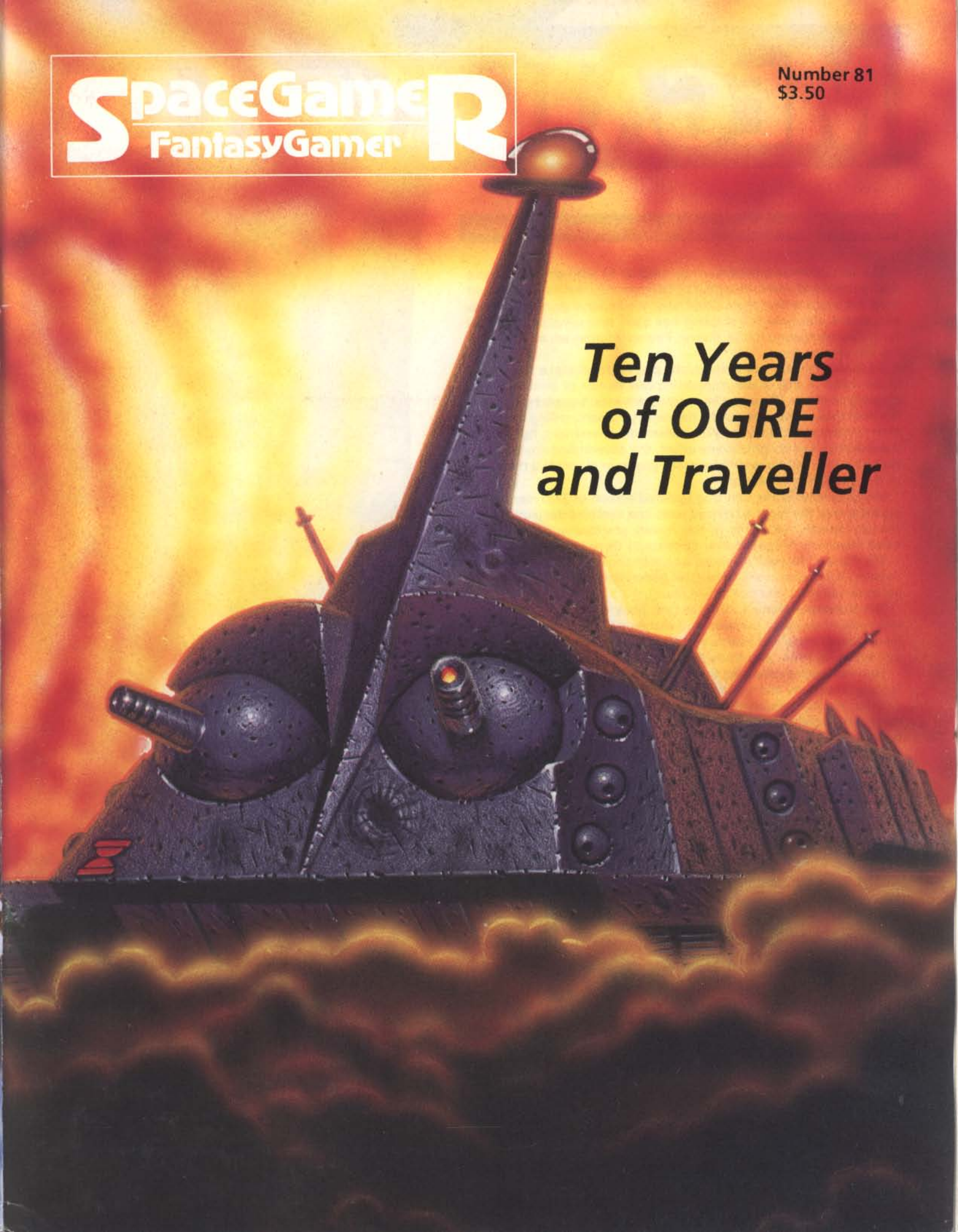

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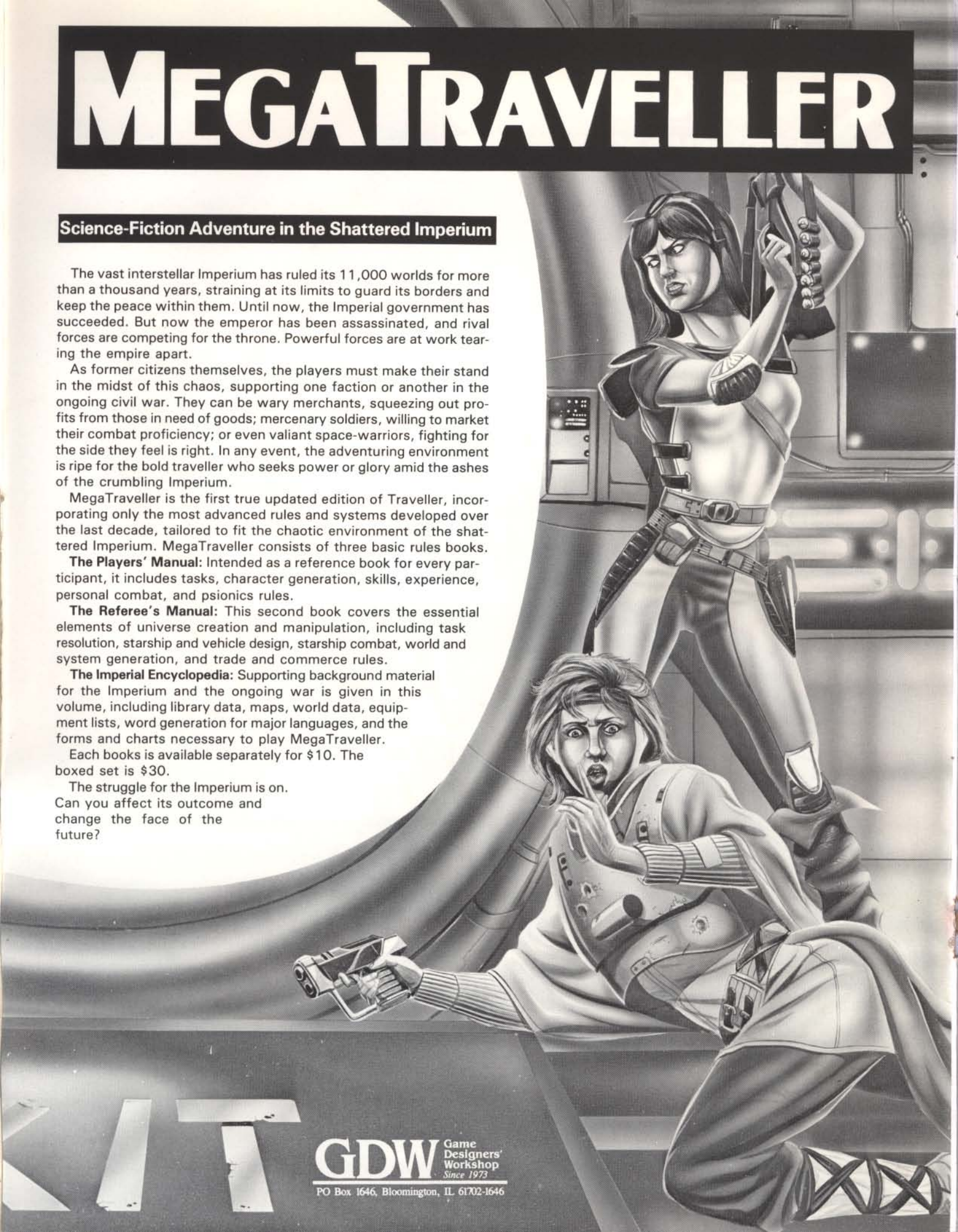

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EDITORIAL

This issue is a celebration of the tenth annivarsary of OGRE by Steve Jackson Games and TRAVELLER by Game Designers' Workshop. The cover of this issue is courtesy of Origin Systems who did the computer version of OGRE. Articles on both games appear in the Space Section along with some other goodies. The Fantasy Section features reviews of some of the far eastern adventures that have come out recently. There is a play-by-mail article on a nifty sounding game called "Tactical Assault Group" and book reviews.

The feedback on the book review column is good. The readers like what they've seen so far. There seems to be an interest in seeing more computer gaming material, but few of you are submitting reviews or articles. Please send either or both. The feedback indicates you are curious about new or lesser known game systems. Look for more articles and scenarios about both. These explanations are in addition to the features we will continue to do on the more common systems. Continue to send in those feedback cards, it's one of the best ways to keep us informed of what interests our readers.

Send in reviews. If you picked up a new game at a recent convention, write it up. Capsule reviews are welcome. Who knows, once you try this writing stuff, you may decide it's not so bad.

COVENTION CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 5-7
War Con '88
c/o MSC Nova
Box J-1
College Station, TX 77844

FEBRUARY 12-15
Coctume Con 6
112 Orchard Ave.
Mountain View, CA 94043

FEBRUARY 12-14
Genghis Con IX
Denver Gamers' Association
Box 2945
Littleton, CO 80161

FEBRUARY 12-14
Orccon
DTI, Inc.
Box 8399
Long Beach, CA 90808

MARCH 4-6
Bashcon '88
2801 W. Bancroft St.
Toledo, OH 43606

MARCH 4-6
ConQuistador V
Box 15471.
San Diego, CA 92115

MARCH 4-6
Jaxcon South 12, Dept. A
Box 4423
Jacksonville, FL 32201

MARCH 11-13
Calcon III
Box 204 Station M
220 4th Ave. SE
Calgary, Ab
T2P 2H6, Canada

APRIL 8-10
MISConception, Too
AGC, Metro State College
1006 11th Street Box 39
Denver, CO 80204

APRIL 22-24
Contretempts 7
c/o LOOSE
Box 45
Omaha, NE 68101

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Tempe, AZ 85282, (602) 967-7979.

LETTERS

Dear Anne,

Issue #79 was great. Each one looks more professional. I appreciate the fact that your reviews express both the good and bad features of a game in a mature and literate manner. I get tired of reading mags that do nothing but whine about the bad points of a game, or others that try to gloss over real dogs for fear of losing the advertising $$$.

All games have some negative aspects; real bow-wows don't deserve to be reviewed.

Scanner is good. Helps keep track of what's doing in the industry.

Although I don't play TMNT, I enjoyed the adventure because it gave me a couple of ideas for the ones I do play. Same for the Talisman Q/A.

Here's one 'Aye' vote for book reviews. With all the F&SF books available, it's nice to have some help deciding which ones to read first.

Computer Games... YES.

Though I have played or read about a game before, often the computer mag reviewers don't have a strong background in the non-computer aspects of role-playing. It's interesting to see what the different camps view as strengths and weaknesses in the same game.

Baseball Computer Games... NO!

I can read about that stuff in Computer Gaming World. The bottom line: With the minor exception noted above, everything in #79 was useful, or at least, interesting.

Sincerely,

Robert H. Lamb
Sacramento, California

Greetings TSGers!!!

I must say that I approved of the "rebirth" of the SPACE GAMER. As of this date you've managed to get closer to recapturing the "flavor" of the old TSG with each issue. I, for one, find myself looking forward to each issue. (So when are you going to go monthly?)

Your latest issue, #79, was the best yet, although there were perhaps a few too many reviews for my taste. Why don't you bring back the "capsule review" idea, and free up more space for articles on strategy, variants, and the like?

I particularly like Scanner. Keep it no matter what!

Another of my favorite sections is Computer Games. I'm always glad to see a place that will focus more on fantasy and wargaming software. This is one section that you could expand pretty easily. I've no doubt that the bulk of your readership owns at least one computer. A suggestion: Do a series of articles focusing on a different genre, i.e., wargames, fantasy adventures, etc.

When are we going to see some GURPS related material?

Some quibbles concerning TSG #79:

1. In the GURPS review, Michael DeWolfe stated that GURPS was Steve Jackson's first role-playing game. Obviously, he forgot The Fantasy Trip, designed by Steve and published by Metagaming between 1977-1980.

2. The article on baseball simulation software completely passed over (in my opinion) the best such package published, Earl Weaver Baseball. It is currently only available for the Amiga, and is being ported to the Apple IIgs. No baseball fan should miss this one!

3. Murphy's Rules states that The Fantasy Trip was owned by Steve Jackson Games, when in fact it is still owned by Metagaming.

Well, that's about it. You're doing good work, guys and gals... Keep it up!

The One and Only,
Steven Woodcock
"Bunbury"

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. The Space Gamer welcomes submissions from its readers. Scott, why don't you put together something on computer games? You wanted GURPS material... Continue reading this issue.

A WARGAMER RANTS

Dear Editor,

It is becoming more obvious than ever that Science Fiction/Fantasy Gaming is nothing more than a leech that has attached itself to wargaming. Our grand hobby was well established long before the dragons, elves, and other ridiculous concoctions of unsound minds came along. Now the space cadets, wizards, and other loonies want to take advantage of the solid foundation that has taken us many years of dedicated, hard work to build.

It has been suggested that wargaming and SF/F gaming "need one another" in order to survive. We are all supposed to be "adventure gamers" now. I totally disagree! Wargaming has survived the storms of the past - bad ones - without any help. Must we now depend on something else? There is no valid reason to assume that we must.

As a veteran wargamer I find it absolutely disgusting that an historical, educational hobby such as ours should be associated with SF/F gaming in any way, shape, or form.

Sincerely yours,
Franklin W. Dombrosky
Nederland, TX

This space cadet is willing to assume wargamers are fellow human beings and most of the ones I know are. This looks like a letter to another DTI publication that was misdirected. A fate that its author shares.

The August pilgrimage to MECCA and GenCon was an enjoyable journey. This year it ran from the 20th to the 23rd in Milwaukee, WI at the MECCA Convention center. There were some new things to scrutinize, but mostly there were expansions of familiar games. West End was selling **Paranoia** tee shirts and hats. The higher the clearance level you wanted, the more money you paid. I think the computer was in on this one. Ultraviolet ones were not for sale, although the West End staff all seemed to have ultraviolet hats, hmmm. The **Star Wars** stormtrooper made an appearance, this time with audio. He was very popular and treated with the utmost respect, little children scurried from his path and adults stepped aside. You aren't rude to a man with a blaster.

Bally was demonstrating a pinball and arcade version of a **Dungeon & Dragons** game. The few glimpses I caught through bigger people's elbows looked good. There was a crowd around both games the whole time the dealer room was open. The dealer room was moved to a bigger hall in the convention center this year. In fact, there was so much room that the art show was in a section of the dealers' room. Few exhibitors were running demo's in the dealers' room, Game Designers' Workshop was an exception with its new **Star Cruiser 2300** space game. They also had the Soviet Vehicles' Guide for **Twilight: 2000**, Bastogne for **Command Decision** and Darrians for **Traveller**. Leading Edge Games had **Phoenix Command** and their more recent release, **Living Steel**. There are modules planned for both.

The people at New Infinities Productions were busy talking to a lot of conventioneers. **Cyborg Commando part 1** was available at the show, along with a fantasy setting and several of the paperback books. Mayfair Games gathered lots of people interested in checking out the boxed release of **City State of the Invincible Overlord**. While the title will be familiar to some of you, the contents underwent an extensive rewrite. Mayfair added some nifty four-color maps and overlay sheets as well. Other items of interest at the booth were the announcements of upcoming releases of another Watchmen module for **D.C. Heroes** called **Taking Out the Trash** which features the Comedian, and the **Lone Wolf and Cub** role-playing game. The Watchmen Miniatures were available at the Grenadier booth.

On the lighter side, R. Talsorian Games' **Teenagers from Outer Space** had an adventure for sale entitled **Field Trip**. (There's a scenario in the fantasy section of this very issue, if you're unfamiliar with the zaniness.)

The folks at Chaosium were also running demo's of a board game at the booth, theirs was **Arkham Horror**. Also available was a hardback edition of **Stormbringer** that included the boxed rules and the companion supplement.

Sleuth Publications was featuring old and new. In the old catagory were **Gamelords and Judges' Guild** materials. In the new slot was the boxed Ident-a-kit for **Mercenary, Spies and Private Eyes**. In the new and old area was the Tekumel book, Volume I, Book 1 with Books II and III to follow this year and Volumes II and III next year.

Ral Partha released a boxed set of **Rules According to Ral**. Also available were some amusing postcards for your gaming friends that featured Ral Partha miniatures, of course.

Steve Jackson Games released **Uncle Alberts' Calendar, AADA Road Atlas Volume II, the West Coast** along with patches for Ogre and AADA.

Nova Game designs released two **BattleTech Lost Worlds'** booklets, **Shadowhawk** and **Griffin**.

FASA Corp. released a boardgame called **Renegade Legion Interceptor.** The **BattleTech** releases were **Succession Wars, BattleForce,** and **BattleTech Manual**.

Timeline and the **Project Directors Screen** for **Morrow Project** and **Vehicular Blueprints for Morrow Project** were available. At the same booth, from the same people, was MacIntosh software for $29.95. The game available at the show was **Battle Stations, Sunfighter** is scheduled for Christmas.

TAG Industries announced that Dennis Mize would be sculpting their **Morrow Project** Line of miniatures. New for the show was the Children of Valhalla line. Palladium Books announced the upcoming release of **Beyond the Supernatural,** a modern horror, role-playing game, and **Ninjas and Super Spies** supplement to the Palladium Role-Playing system.

Computer vendors were busy selling software. Strategic Simulations, Inc. upcoming release will be **Sons of Liberty**, a war game of the American Revolution. Look for **Shiloh** for the IBM as well.

Sky Realms of Jorune publishers of **Jorune** and a growing number of supplements, software and tee shirts were present. This company doesn't get to the east coast too often, some of us hadn't seen all the new products.

TSR, Inc., the hosts of the convention, released **Top Secret, SI,** a new edition, **Chase**, a strategy game. A hot seller was the **Manual of the Planes** for AD&D.

This is the place to discover what's new in gaming products. There will be a list of scheduled releases from the manufacturers. Short write-ups of new products and events will be included to help make your gaming more enjoyable.

NEW RELEASES

These products are scheduled for late Fall of 1987. Last minute changes and delays are possible.

The Avalon Hill Game Co.
Gloranthan Bestiary, RuneQuest III
Apple Lane, RuneQuest III
Snakepipe Hollow, RunQuest III

Chaosium, Inc.
Cthulhu Now, Call of Cthulhu Supplement

Columbia Games, Inc.
Ibanvaal, Harn
Trierzon, Harn

Creations Unlimited
City of brass, fantasy module

FASA Corporation
USS Northampton frigate, Starship miniatures
USS Remora escort, Starship miniatures
Fluttering Petal, Renegade Legion Interceptor miniature
Gladius, Renegade Legion Interceptor miniature
Interceptor Scenario Pack, Renegade Legion

Game Designers' Workshop
Team Yankee, boardgame
Referee's Handbook, MegaTraveller game book
MegaTraveller, boxed set
Urban Guerilla, Twilight: 2000 adventure
Mission Beyond Arcturus, Traveller: 2300 adventure

Games Workshop US
Warhammer, 40,000, science fiction miniature rules
Death Zone, Blood Bowl expansion
Warhammer City, Warhammer Role-playing supplement
The Fury of Dracula, boardgame
Chaos Marauders, card game
Mega Mania, boardgame
City Block, science fiction floor plans
Dungeonquest, boardgame

Iron Crown Enterprises
Teeth of Mordor, MERP supplement
Rolemaster Companion II, Rolemaster Rules supplement
Assassins of Dol Amroth, MERP adventure
Lost Realm of Cardolan, MERP Campaign

Leading Edge Games
Civilian Police Weapons, Phoenix Command
Living Steel module

Mayfair Games, Inc.
Lines of death, DC Heroes adventure
When a Stranger, DC Heroes adventure

MicroProse Software, Inc.
Pirates, Apple II, IBM

New Infinities Productions, Inc.
Cyborg Champions Rules Set #2
Castle Crestwood, Fantasy Master setting

Palladium Books
Beyond the Supernatural, Role-playing game

Rafm, Inc.
Hussite War Wagon, Siege Artillery
Civil War Artillery, Seige Artillery
Reptiliads

R. Talsorian Games
Mekton II, role-playing game
Mekton Empire, Mekton II sepplement
Night of the Living Teenagers, Teenagers From Outer Space adventure

Ral Partha Enterprises, Inc.
great Griffen Chariot of the Wind Lord, boxed set
JR-D Jenner, BattleTech
WTH-1 Whitworth, BattleTech
ZNV-1R Vindicator, BattleTech
QKD-4G Quickdraw, BattleTech
SDR-5V Spider, BattleTech
OTT-7J Ostscout, BattleTech
ASN-21 Assassin, BattleTech
DV-6M Dervish, BattleTech
OSR-2C Ostroc, BattleTech
STG-A5 Stinger Lam, BattleTech

Sleuth Publications
Tekumel Source Book, Vol. I, Book III

Steve Jackson Games, Inc.
Isaac Asimov Presents Star Traders
Horseclans, GURPS supplement
GURPS Humanx Commonwealth, GURPS supplement
GURPS Space, GURPS supplement

Strategic Simulations, Inc.
Sons of Liberty, C 64

AG Industries
Valkyrie & Pegasus, Children of Valhalla line
Ice Serpent, Children of Valhalla line
Giant Wolf, Children of Valhalla line
Ice Sled, Children of Valhalla line
Polar Ice Worm, Children of Valhalla line
Polar Bear, Children of Valhalla line
Snow Leopards, Children of Valhalla line

Task Force Games
Federation and Empire, Total War
The Second Hole-Delvers Catalog
Terra-Fire
Operation Red Sword, Delta Force adventure

Timeline, Ltd.
Sunfighter, MacIntosh

TSR, Inc.
Flames of Doom, Marvel Super Heroes module
Epsilon sector, Gamma World Module
Agent 13 Sourcebook, Top Secret / SI Accessory
Moscow, 1941, SPI boardgame
La Grande Armee, SPI boardgame
Atlas of the Dragonlance Worlds, Dragonlance supplement

West End Games, Inc.
Star Wars Sourcebook, Star Wars supplement

CORRECTION

In issue #79 the release date for the Dungeons & Dragons computer games from Strategic Simulations, Inc. was incorrectly listed as 1987. The games will be released in 1988. We apologize for the error.

The Chronicles is a free newsletter available from Bard Games that keeps you abreast of new developments in the world of Talislanta. To get your copy write The Chronicles, c/o Bard Games, Box 7729, Greenwich, CT 06836.

The latest issue of Harnlore contains an updated release schedule. The items listed above are from it. Other items listed for release this year are delayed until 1988. Other things to expect are Castles of Harn and Pilot's Almanac.

The Rafm 1987 catalog includes a detailed section on making tabletop scenery, a painting guide for the beginner, and some tips for the more experienced painter. $2.00 from Rafm Company, Inc., 19 Concession St., Cambridge, Ont. N 1R 2G6.

Star Fleet Battles Players, do you have the **SFB Tactics Manual** released in the Fall? Task Force Games, 1110 N. Fillmore, Amarillo, TX 79107.

Between Worlds is a Traveller fanzine produced bi-monthly. $1.50 for sample issures from Magnus M. Abel, 3914 Anegles, Tampa, FL 33629.

New Infinities Productions, Inc. announced that their paperback release, **Sea of Death** by Gary Gygax, appeared on the bestseller list of Walden's.

Strategic Simulations, Inc. announced the following games are in the works; a tactical Napoleonic game using a much modified Antietam/Gettysburg system, a game on rebel warfare in Afghanistan, and a WWII squad level game.

Williamsboards is a word game played with cards where you come up with sayings for the billboards in the town of Jingle. $10. From Williamsboards, c/o R&S Graphics, 416 West Ontario, Chicago, IL 60610.

The **Ogre Reinforcement Pack** contains replacement counters for your used and abused ones, three scenarios and some new rules. Available from Steve Jackson Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760.

Looking for an out of print title? Try Zocchi Distributors, 1512 30th Ave., Gulfport, MS 39501. Their Hex-O-Gram newsletter has an entire page of them.

Game Designers' Workshop has a free eight page booklet called Understanding 2300 that gives examples on creating characters, worlds and more info on the Pentapods and Kafers.

R. Talsorian's **Teenagers from Outer Space** will be meeting Antartic Press' Ninja High School comic strip characters in a graphic titled Crisis of Infinite Ninja Teenagers. Look for it in the winter.

Lion Rampart is offering Whimsy Cards. This deck of 44 cards allows different interventions that add plot twists to your fantasy campaign. The cards say such things as, Horrible Failure, Bizarre Coincidence. The players use them to add a new touch to the story and the referee can veto them. They can add spontaneity to any situation. $3.95 from Lion Rampart, Box 621, Northfield, MN 55057.

Twentieth Century Imports released sets 9 and 10 of their BattleTech Series. Set #9 is the Stinger and Stinger Lam., #10 Phornix Hawk and Phoenix Hawk Lam. Available at Gen Con was the Leopard Class Drop Ship.

Creations Unlimited released four fantasy modules written by Robert Kuntz, **Prisoners of the Maze, Dimensions of Flight, Tower Chaos, The Eight Kings**. $8 plus 75¢ postage and handling. Creations Unlimited, Box 484, Whitewater, WI 53190.

Supremacy Games released resource deck two for the **Supremacy Game**. From Supremacy Games, Inc., 425 Statler Towers, Buffalo, NY 14202.

Do you have a regular gaming group that would be interested in play-testing new games? If so, contact Game Lovers, an organization whose members are serious gamers and have a chance to preview new products. Game Lovers, 5483 N. Northwest Highway, Chicago, IL 60631.

Bally Midway-Sente, the people who make video and pinball machines, introduced the Dungeons & Dragons Adventure Video Game and Pinball game at Gen Con.

Lots of stuff in the works for **Jorune** from the folks at Sky Realms, including a Thriddle campaign, IBM compatible software and miniatures. To get on their mailing list write Sky Realms of Jorune, Box 5543, Berkeley, CA 94705.

More information from Strategic Simulations, Inc. about the 1988 release of the official computer version of AD&D. There are three products planned at his time, a series of adventure games using the AD&D rules, a multi-player arcade style game, and a Dungeonmaster aid disk. All three lines will be available for Apple II, IBM, Commodore 64/128, Atari St, and Amiga.

Strategic Simulations, Inc. is selling a hintbook for Realms of Darkness. You do want to make the elevator work, don't you/ $2 to SSI Customer Support Dept., 1046 N. Rengstorff Ave., Mountain View, CA 94043 gets you the info.

Flying Buffalo introduced the Door Dice at Gen Con. It's a six-sided die that says the following about something you want to open... Open, locked, stuck, magically locked, and trapped. Ask about the new colors for the "death dice", ivory, and lime green. Flying Buffalo, Box 1647, Scottsdale, AZ 85252.

Fantasy Games, Unlimited announced the release of a Villains and Vigilantes module called **For the Greater God**. It's about a mad plot for wealth and fame through a television ministry. Can you resist? Fantasy Games Unlimited, Box 1082, Gilbert, AZ 85234.

The Tekumel Source Books being published by Sleuth Publications are re-printings of the Tekumel Books from the Empire of the Petal Throne. The three books being published this year are Volume I. Look for Volume II and III next year.

Ragarok has a bulletin board up and running. The number is (512) 323-9072. That's a Texas area code.

Timeline has the Project Directors Screen for Morrow Project back in print and Vehicular Blueprints for Morrow Project. $5 and $6.95 Timeline Ltd., Box 60, Ypsilanti, MI 48197.

The **Apple Lane** and **Snakepipe Hollow RuneQuest III** adventures released by the Avalon Hill Game Co. and written by Chaosium are indeed updates of the early RuneQuest adventures with stats converted to RuneQuest III and some other major adjustments.

Comico announced that characters from their graphic novel, **Night and the Enemy** will be featured in a NBC television movie to be written by Harlan Ellison and directed by Roger Corman. In other areas, Comico announced that Matt Wagner will be doing the art as well as the writing in four issues of **Grendel**. Look for them around the first of the year. Comico also announced that Doug Murray of Marvel Comics **The Nam** will be writing the **Justice Machine** for Comico.

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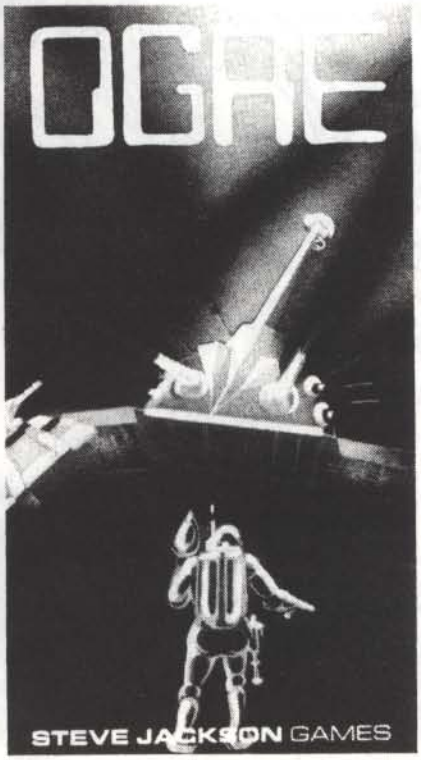


by
Scott Robert Ladd

This year marks the tenth anniversary of two Science Fiction Games. Ogre by Steve Jackson Games and Traveller by Games Designers Workshop. There's something for each system in this issue.

Lieutenant Miles of the 1101st Scout Platoon, Army of the Combine, stood on top of a small hill. A powerful electronic sighting device was attached to the faceplate of his helmet. His mind was on the horizon. The land for miles around was scorched and barren; a barrage of nuclear weapons during the previous week had obliterated the forest that had once been there.

He almost overlooked it. A small plume of dust just visible beyond a rise 20 klicks east of his position. Miles knew that the Paneuropean Army was in that direction. The enemy.

"Heads up," he radioed to the eleven soldiers resting on the west side of the hill. "We've got company." Miles heard them moving about, checking power supplies, cracking quick jokes. Most of them were new recruits; none had ever seen combat. Miles hoped that they would not be introduced to it on this day.

The dust cloud was larger when he looked again. "If we only had a drone," Miles thought. Whatever was producing the cloud was moving fast. Miles was already in the process of contacting the nearest Combine Command Post.

"There's a report coming in from Section 703, General," said the sargeant. "It's Lieutenant Miles of the eleven-oh-first Scouts." The general moved closer to the monitor; it showed what Miles could see through his electronically enhanced eyes... Bleak, red-brown desert. And the dust cloud.

"Alert all units," the general ordered. "Why don't we have an audio connection?"

"Minor problem, sir," the sargeant replied. He worked with the monitor's controls. Suddenly, Miles voice began echoing into the room.

"...slowly south, but mostly to the west," Miles was saying. "I think we'll be able to see it in a few moments. We're preparing to move to cover as soon as we ID the Unknown. Wait! I think I can make something out... it's an Ogre!"

There was fear and tension in the Command Post. Miles' voice continued.

"Unit is a Mark III from the size of it. I can make out some details. Looks like it carries an extra pair of missiles, and two main batteries. Two secondaries appear to have been removed. Damn, we're pulling back."

A small puff of smoke appeared near the Ogre's missile tubes. There was a bright flash on the monitor, and a loud roar from the speakers. The sargeant began frantically trying to regain contact with Miles. After a few moments, he looked at the general, and shook his head.

"Sound full alert!" commanded the general. "All units are to converge on Sector 703. Colonel, I want every drone we've got available out tracking that Ogre. It'll be after us next."

You can provide your own ending for the story. The antagonist is an Ogre, but it is not the 'standard' cybertanks previously published. Sometimes, I've wished for a Mark IV with an extra main battery, or a Mark III with a few more missiles. There has been no system, though, for designing new Ogres, or for calculating a value for them. This article contains a rules supplement to fill that gap.

0.0 INTRODUCTION

The following is a rules expansion for the game **OGRE** and **G.E.V.** It describes a process where players may design their own Ogres, and then calculate a Point Value for these new units. The process of building an Ogre has three steps:

1. Constructing a Hull
2. Adding Weapons Systems to the Hull
3. Determining a Point Value for the New Ogre

1.0 CONSTRUCTING A HULL

Every Ogre has a hull. It contains the cybernetic brain,

TABLE I
WEAPONS' SYSTEMS

Weapon System	Spaces	Cost	Combat Values	Comments
Main Battery	3	8	4/3 D4	
Secondary Battery	2	4	3/2 D3	D2 version costs 3
Antipersonnel	1/2	1	1/1 D1	Only used against infantry or DO CPs
External Missile	1	1	6/5 D3	One-shot Weapon
Missile Rack	2	6	D4	Fires Internal Missiles
Internal Missile	1/2	1/2	6/5	See Missile Rack
Stealth Unit	3		n/a	See above in text

Combat values are identical to those in **OGRE/G.E.V.**

nuclear engines to power the Ogre, sensor devices, Tread Units, and armor to protect these items. Only the tread Units are added by the player. Everything else comes with the hull for free.

There are three phases to hull construction:

1. Deciding on the size of the hull
2. Assign a movement rate
3. Add Tread Units based on the Movement Rate selected in phase 2

1.1 DECIDING ON A HULL SIZE

A hull may have a "Size" of between 5 and 50, inclusive. Fractional amount of Size are only allowed in "half" units; i.e., a hull may have a Size of 24-1/2, but not a Size of 23-1/3. Designers are free to pick any size hull they wish within those limitations. The Point Value (see 3.00) of an Ogre increases with hull size.

1.2 ASSIGNING A MOVEMENT RATE

An Ogre may have a Movement Rate of either 3 or 4. No other Movement Rates are available. No Ogre with a Size of 25 or greater may have a Movement Rate of 4. See 3.0 for details of how an Ogre's Movement Rate effects its Point Value.

1.3 ADDING THE TREAD UNITS

An Ogre with a Movement Rate of 3 can have 15, 30, 45, 60 or 75 Tread Units. An Ogre with a Movement Rate of 4 can have 20, 40, or 60 Tread Units. Section 6.05 of **OGRE** explains how the loss of Tread Units effects an Ogre's Movement Rate.

A cybertank must have at least as many Tread Units as it has Size. A hull of Size 25, for example, would not be able to move with only 15 Tread Units.

2.0 ADDING WEAPONS' SYSTEMS

Once a hull has been built using Section 1.0, weapons may be added. Main Batteries, Secondary Batteries, and Antipersonnel have an unlimited supply of ammunition included with them. An External Missile is a one-shot weapon. If destroyed or fired it should be marked off the Ogre's record sheet. A Missile Rack fires Internal Missiles. See Section 8.07 of **G.E.V.** for details on its operation. The Stealth Unit is a specialized piece of equipment. Any attacks against an Ogre equipped with a Stealth Unit (with the exception of infantry overruns) is modified by -1, because of the strong ECM supplied by the unit.

Table I gives attributes for each weapon system.

Weapons may be placed in any combination in a hull. The total

"spaces" of all weapons in a hull can not exceed the Size of that hull. An Ogre with a Size greater than 20 cannot have a Stealth Unit.

"Cost" is used in Section 3.0 during calculation of an Ogre's Point Value. The Stealth Unit affects Point Value differently than other weapons. See Section 3.0 (The Stealth Unit is taken from the article "The Ninja and the Cub", in the June 1982 issue of *The Space Gamer*.

Internal Missiles and a Stealth Unit may not be destroyed until all other components of the Ogre have been eliminated. At this point, they are considered destroyed, too. Only one Stealth Unit may be installed on any Ogre.

3.0 DETERMINING THE OGRE'S POINT VALUE

A Point Value can be calculated for any Ogre using the following formula:

$$\frac{(S+W) * M * T * S}{4}$$

= Point Value

The variables used in this equation are:

S This factor is equal to the Size of the Ogre's hull.

W Add together the costs (from Table I) of all weapons installed in this Ogre, and use this number for "W".

M If the Ogre has a Movement Rate of 4, M = 1.1
If the Ogre has a Movement Rate of 3, M = 1

T If the Ogre has 15 or 20 Tread Units, T = 0.9
If the Ogre has 60 Tread Units, T = 1.1
If the Ogre has 75 Tread Units, T = 1.15
Otherwise, T = 1.0

S If the Ogre has a Stealth Unit installed, S = 1.5
If not, S = 1.0

The Point Value generated by this formula can be used in Cease Fire Collapse scenarios when trading armor units for Ogres. An Ogre with a Point Value of 15 would cost a player 15 armor units to purchase. This "trade value" represents true value, unlike the trade values shown in Section 9.056 of G.E.V.

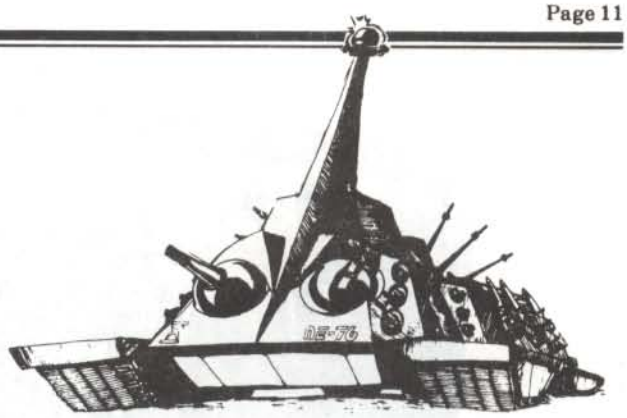
Let's build an Ogre and see how this system works.

Combine and Paneuropean scientists wanted a fast, sneaky Ogre. Let's start with a Size 20 hull. We'll give it a movement of 4, and 40 Tread Units. A Stealth Unit is installed, and the remaining 17 spaces contain 2 External Missiles, 1 Missile Rack, 4 Internal Missiles, 1 Main Battery, 2 Secondary Batteries, and 8 Antipersonnel. How much is this Ogre worth? With all the values filled into the formula from Section 3.0, (see that section

TABLE II
Values for Existing Ogres

Ogre Type	Size	Point Value
Mark I	5	4
Mark II	10	8
Mark III	17	13
Mark IV	24-1/2	21
Mark V	30	24

Ogre Type	Size	Point Size
Mark VI	43	36
Mark III-B	22	17
"Fencer"	30	22
"Ninja"	20	23



for details on assignment of values) we have:

$$\frac{(20 + 34) * 1.1 * 1 * 1.5}{4}$$

$$= 22.275, \text{ or } 23$$

Our Ogre, which just happens to be a Combine "Ninja" (see the June 1982 issue of *The Space Gamer*), is "worth" 23 armor units. In a Cease Fire Collapse scenario, a player would have to give up 23 armor units in order to have a "Ninja" in his forces.

Table II shows Hull Sizes and Point Values for all of the previously published Ogres.

Victory points scored for damaging an Ogre are the same as those values listed in Section 9.012 of **G.E.V.** I suggest that a player also score victory points equal to the Size of the hull when he destroys an Ogre completely, and that the victory point value of all weapons be increased by 1/2 if the Ogre has a Stealth Unit installed. In other words, destroying the main battery on a Ninja-type Ogre should be worth 12 victory points, rather than the standard 8 VP, because of the Stealth Unit. Destroying the Ninja would gain an additional 20 victory points for its hull size.

An Ogre's armament can only be determined by the opposing player if he has a unit within five hexes of the Ogre. Another suggestion is to give each player a budget, before a scenario, to build Ogres. Say, fifty points. Each player could build or take Ogres with Point Values totalling to 50.

Whatever you decide, the main purpose of the game is to have fun. Nuke those towns, crush those Command Posts... But look out for that Ogre over the next hill...

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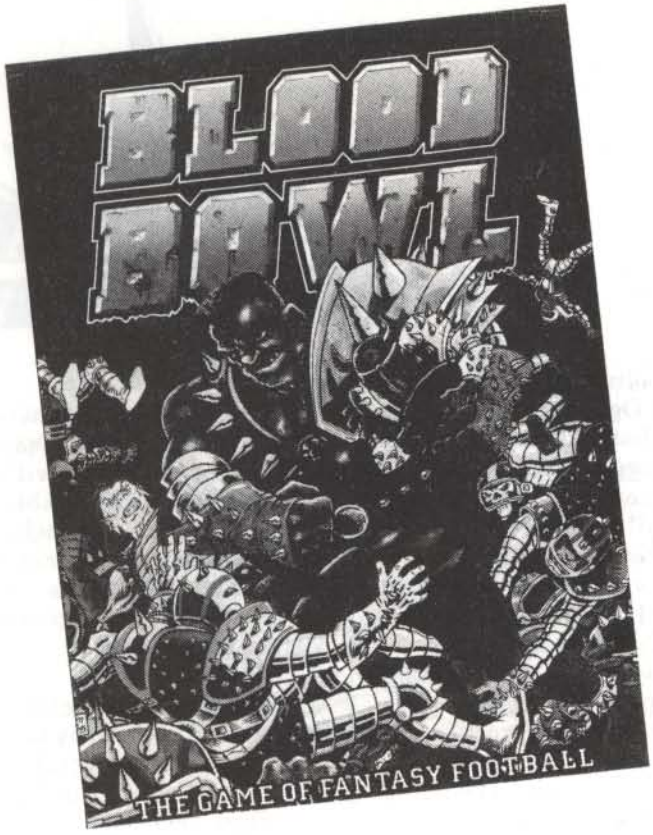

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The following questions and answers on Game Workshop's BLOOD BOWL game contains important rules' corrections and clarifications.

1. Star Player Points: If a player gets the same magic item twice does he:

a. Effectively lose the second roll, since two helmets of accuracy are no more useful than one?

b. Reroll on the magic table until he gets a different magic item?

c. Reroll on the SPP table?

d. Get the second magic item which he may then give to another player on the same team?

Reroll on the SPP Table.

2. Can a magic item be transferred between players of the same team?

No.

3. Can a defensive player also be designated as the kicking player?

No. The extra armor a defensive player has to wear would not allow him to kick the football effectively.

4. If a defensive player has magic armor are the effects cumulative, i.e. is he immune to injury?

No, the player would have a saving throw of 2-6.

5. Can distances be counted diagonally?

Yes.

6. Page 5 says, "a kicking player must have a strength of 3 or more and a cool of 7 or more", but the kicking table has no column for strength 3. How is a kick by a strength 3 player resolved?

The table is wrong. The strength column headings should in all cases be one less than what is printed.

7. Under "Attacks" it states that all attacks are completed before any tackles are resolved. In the section on dodging tackles it states that this is the only case where attacks and tackles are not assumed to happen simultaneously. These seem to be mutually contridictory statements. Which is correct?

All attacks are resolved before tackles take place alowing a player to wound an opponent before he is tackled. The sentence referred to in dodging rules should read, "this is the only case where tackles are not assumed to happen simultaneously".

8. At which point does a player roll against his "cool" if he hates an opposing player he wishes to tackle?

The instant the tackle is declared.

9. If a player carrying the football is wounded but makes his armor saving throw does he still drop the football?

No.

10. In a campaign are:
Ogres ever permitted to have 2 or more SPPs?

Yes.

Are Trolls ever permitted SPPs?

No. They are just too stupid to learn from experience.

Can two or more Troglodytes on the same team have SPPs?

Yes.

Are the effects of multiple broken arms or legs cumulative?

Yes, but no characteristic can

ever be reduced to less than 1.

Can players be "sacked" from a team between games, so that they can be replaced?

Yes.

11. The rules for concussed or stupid players are ambiguous:

Does the owning player roll once per game, or at the start of each of his turns?

Roll once per turn.

Do they move in their own team's phase or the opposing team's phase?

In their own team's phase.

Can they Attack/Tackle players of their own team?

Yes.

Can they score touchdowns for the opposing team?

Yes.

Does their death zone affect their own team or the opposing team?

It affects their own team.

If they move in their own team's phase who decides if they move before the rest of their team or after them?

The opposing coach can decide to move them before or after everyone else on their team. However, if he decided to move them after the team they must wait until all the players on the team have finished their moves before moving the players.

12. Why do you only get six halfling counters?

The following was missed from the rules: "There are only six halfling counters in Blood Bowl, for use with the Heroes of Law special team. Anyone crazy enough to want to coach a full halfling team will have to use counters for other races to represent the rest of the players."

RULES CLARIFICATIONS

1. The football may only be handed off to a standing player.
2. The football may only be handed off once in the Throwing and Kicking Phase. In other words you may hand off the football once, and then either throw or kick it once.
3. A prone player may not catch the football.

OPTIONAL RULES

The following new rules are optional, but highly recommended. Only use them if both coaches agree so before the game.

STRIPPING THE FOOTBALL

When tackling the player may attempt to strip the football (knock it from the opposing player's hands) if they declare so before the die roll for the tackle attempt. When attempting to strip the football the player suffers a -1 modifier to the tackle die roll, but if it is successful they may subtract their strength from the opponent's cool when they roll to see if they drop the football. Apart from the above all the normal tackle rules apply.

INCREASED SCATTER AND BOUNCE

At **medium range** roll twice for scatter from a missed throw or kick.

At **long range** roll three times for scatter from a missed throw or kick.

When resolving where a ball ends up when it is bouncing remember what the die rolls were. If you roll "doubles" (you roll one followed by a one on the scatter table, or a two followed by a two, etc.) roll for bounce again in the new square (and you roll doubles again the ball bounces again, and again, and again...)

FALLING OVER

When a player attempts to catch the football and fails, they are assumed to have fallen in the attempt. Place the counter sideways in the stand as if the player had been successfully tackled but do not role for injury.

MOVING THROUGH DEATH ZONES

With this rule a player may move from a square in a death zone directly to another square in a death zone. However, every opposing player who exerts a death zone on the new square gets a free attack or tackle on the player, who may not fight back. If the player survives this and is still standing they may carry on moving. This rule applies only in the movement phase, not the reserve movement phase.

PUSHING

If a standing player successfully tackles another player and is not tackled himself he may decide to push that player back instead of knocking him over. To do this, move the tackled player one square directly away from the player who tackled him (if this square is occupied the player cannot be pushed back) and place the tackling player in the square originally occupied by the tackled player (ignoring all death zones). The tackled player remains standing and does not have to roll for injury.

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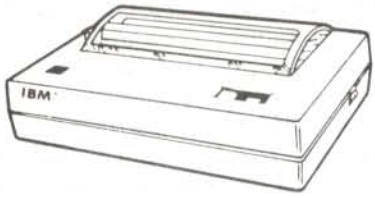

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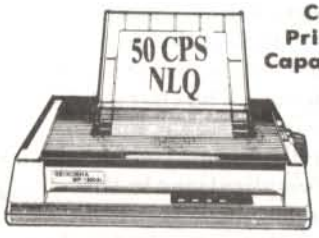

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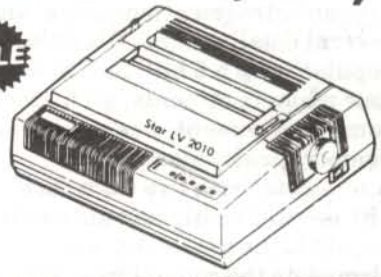

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MANHUNT is a Traveller, science fiction, role-playing adventure. It takes place on the bustling merchant, planet Diavlo, and involves a party of three to six player-characters.

Manhunt

by
Bill Cassel

DIAVLO

Diavlo, (A-962946-D) fourth planet of the star of the same name, is a very important merchant trading center located centrally in a dense cluster of stars. A large number of nearby systems depend on Diavlo as a supplier of shipping for both raw materials and manufactured goods; upon the prosperity of Diavlo rests the prosperity of a multitude of agricultural and industrial planets.

Diavlo's sun is an F-type star, and Diavlo is the only habitable planet of 11 in the system. Diavlo is approximately 9,000 miles (14400 km) in diameter, has a standard oxygen/nitrogen atmosphere, and several small oceans. Diavlo's population is 5.6 billion. There are four major continents, all under the same government, a council of eight democratically elected representatives, two from each continent. The highest authority on Diavlo is the president, who is elected by the council from within their own ranks. The current president is Hallon Curero, who is in the second year of his five-year term.

THE SITUATION

The player-characters are currently on layover on Diavlo. If they do not own their own ship, they are assumed to be a part of the crew of a merchant vessel; if they do own their own ship, they are making a delivery of cargo. In either case, the cargo is gems and the customer is a coalition of investors, through a resale agent. It will take two weeks for the agent to complete the transaction, so the PCs are required to remain on Diavlo for two weeks until either the ship they crew will leave or, if it is their ship, they will receive their pay. It is Diavlo's summer season, and so it's not an unpleasant place to be stranded for two weeks. The coalition will provide lodging at one of the best hotels on the planet, the DeVoto, in the capital city of Azhiro, and 1,000 Credits per character per day expenses. The character's ship is being maintained and refueled at Flint's busy and elaborate dirtside starport, the size of a city itself, just outside Azhiro.

AN OFFER

Five days through their stay on Diavlo, the characters are approached by an old man while dining at the hotel. Introducing himself as Kelton Amadiro, he tells them that he has a business proposition for them, and asks to adjourn to one of their rooms. If the PCs agree, he will propose to them a simple courier job, for which the fee is 250,000 Credits, no questions asked. If the PCs respond in the affirmative, he reveals the task for which he wishes to retain them, first swearing them to secrecy.

Amadiro informs them that he is a representative of an off-planet interest come to collect payment from several Diavlans who wish to invest in his employers' company against the wishes of the Diavlan government. Amadiro then hands the PCs a list containing six names and addresses, saying that each PC is to visit one address. The first two are to be visited the next day; the second two, the day after that, and the last two, the day after that. Upon reaching the assigned address, the PC is to find the person listed at that address and ask him/her for a package for "Kharybdis." The PC is then to receive a small metal package, locked and sealed, with a two digit numerical code on the underside, a different code on each package. There is one package at each address, for a total of six.

On the fourth day, when all of the packages have been collected, the six are to be taken by a single character to a warehouse on the outskirts of Azhiro, the address of which is also listed on the sheet containing the addresses of the six contributors. The courier is to leave the six packages there and destroy the sheet of paper. He is then to string the six two digit codes together in the order in which the packages were collected. This will form a single, twelve digit code which will open a security safe in the warehouse. In this safe will be the address of an apartment in Azhiro and a key; exactly two weeks from the day of their first meeting with Amadiro, one of the PCs is to go to this apartment. In a drawer there will be 150,000 Credits. Amadiro provides the PCs with 100,000 Credits in advance.

The job may be carried out with no hitches. The GM should feel free to add his own embellishments, obstacles and perceived threats to make the actual execution more interesting. The packages, once received, may not be opened without using high explosives which would vaporize their contents. The PCs may retire to their hotel to await the pickup date, 11 days after the last two packages are collected. Attempts to collect the money before the appointed date will yield only empty drawers. The characters' departure from Diavlo will unexpectedly be delayed for one week by complications in the transferrance of the gems. This means that they are scheduled to leave one day after the pick up date. The PCs are to receive their cargo fee or commission upon completion of this transaction.

UNEXPECTED OCCURRENCES

Four days before the characters are scheduled to pick up the final 150,000 Credits, one character (determine randomly) watching a news holograph sees a story about a man caught attempting to smuggle arms off Diavlo the previous day and detained by authorities. He may be recognized (5+ on 2d6) as the

holder of one of the six packages. The same holograph also features a story about President Curero's major policy speech, to take place in a public square in Azhiro two days later.

Indeed, two days later, Curero makes his appearance. Only a few minutes into his speech, Curero suddenly slumps forward onto his podium. Quick examination reveals that he has been shot through the head, by a weapon eventually determined to be a specially modified Gauss Rifle. He is killed on impact.

Diavlo is thrown into chaos; such violence is unknown in its history. Never before has any political figure been threatened, much less assassinated; Diavlo has a peaceful culture in which all cooperate to promote the planet's best interests. Diavlo's remaining political leaders are unsure of how to proceed. The Council's first action is to impose a ban on all travel to and from Diavlo until the assassin is found. To the characters, this will mean that they cannot leave the planet. To Diavlo, it means that many of the customers who depend on them to transport essentials will suddenly be without the supplies they must have, and will be forced to look elsewhere for transport. Therefore, if the killer is not located quickly, many of the planet's political and economic friends will become its enemies, and Diavlo's primary industry, transport, will be destroyed. The Council will then devote the entire police and military forces to the task of locating the assassin. There seem to be no clues to go on. The PCs may go on living it up since no serious restrictions other than the travel ban are placed on civilians.

Two days after the assassination, news reports say that the authorities still have no clues as to the killer's identity. This is the day that one character is scheduled to pick up the final 150,000 Credits from the Azhiro apartment. When the character (or characters, if they decide to disregard Amadiro's instructions) goes to make the pickup, he/they will be surprised and surrounded by twelve armed soldiers. The PC will then be informed that he is charged with the murder of President Hallon Curero, arrested, and imprisoned to await trial.

The events leading up to the arrest will be described as follows: After Curero's assassination, the residence of the man arrested for smuggling arms several days earlier was searched. In a safe there was a telescopic sight matching that on the disposed Gauss Rifle found earlier that day and identified as the murder weapon. The charges against the man were raised from smuggling to accessory to murder. Also found in the safe was the lease to the apartment in Azhiro. When the apartment was searched, and 150,000 Credits discovered, it was assumed that the assassin would be coming to the apartment to pick up the rest of his fee. The apartment was staked out, and when the PC comes for the money he is arrested.

THE TRIAL

The arrested character remains in jail, a trial is scheduled for three weeks later. Experts on Diavlo predict an easy conviction; though the evidence against the character is circumstantial, Diavlans are unaccustomed to political instability and wish to get the incident over with as quickly as possible, and the PC is the only suspect they have.

The man arrested for smuggling and later determined to have supplied the telescopic sight and Azhiro apartment for the assassin will confess that he is a part of a conspiracy to have Curero killed, and provides the authorities with the names and addresses of five others who provided other components of the Gauss Rifle. He insists, however, that he never knew the assassin's identity for reasons of the assassin's safety. The five that he names have long since fled Azhiro after the arrest of the person that could have, as well as they knew, been the assassin, but it is anticipated that they will not be difficult to track down. It will be announced that the travel ban will remain in effect for one week, until the five can be located, arrested, and returned to Azhiro.

The characters at this point may have ascertained that the job for which "Amadiro" hired them was the transporting of the six components of Kharybdis' Gauss Rifle from a conspiracy of contacts to a pickup point for the assassin. In any case, the characters' compatriot is in prison and, unless they wish him to remain there indefinitely, they must locate the real assassin and be able to prove that he is the killer. They must do so within one week, after which the travel ban will be lifted and Kharybdis will disappear into the ether of galactic civilization.

The only real clue available to the characters is the code name "Kharybdis". Not much of a clue at all. The PCs have, in fact, met the assassin, as Kelton Amadiro, whether or not they figure this out. The police will not be of any help in the characters' search, as they believe they have found the killer. If sufficiently pestered, however, they will assign one detective to assist the PCs. This is detective Alena Vernon, a young and talented detective fresh out of the academy with little experience. Vernon is included in this adventure for three reasons: one, to give the PCs access to resources which would otherwise be closed to them; two: to allow the GM to introduce a Deus Ex Machina if the players stray too far afield, and three: to give the PCs a credible witness to reduce the amount of

ALENA VERNON

Strength	6
Agility	8
Endurance	6
Intelligence	9
Speed	6
Accuracy	6
Administration	1
Auto Pistol	1
Interrogation	1
Laser Carbine	1
Survival	1

physical evidence they must produce. Vernon will not solve the mystery, however. The players must do that for themselves.

THE ASSASSINATION

In order to properly referee the search for the assassin, the GM is here provided with the full story of what really happened on Diavlo. The assassin is Arcon Idiere, a native of the planet Novoc. Idiere has made a career out of being a paid political assassin, renowned for his careful planning and flawless execution (no pun intended). He is responsible for seven prior assassinations at various locations in civilized space. His stats are:

ARCON IDIERE

Strength	8
Agility	10
Endurance	9
Intelligence	10
Speed	8
Accuracy	10
Automatic Weapons	3
Bribery	2
Combat Rifleman	3
Computer	2
Demolitions	3
Electronics	2
Forgery	4
High Energy Weapons	2
Streetwise	3
Submachinegun	2
Survival	2
Reconnassiance	3

Late in the year before his death, rumors began to eminate from Hallon Curero's private circle that Curero was considering withdrawing an expedition from Diavlo intended to colonize and mine the nearby planet, Avatol. If this is true, it would mean the end of that effort and the loss of hundreds of millions of Credits by Diavlan businessmen who had invested in the project. These businessmen were understandably distraught at this turn of events. So, when the rumors began to grow more concrete, a small conspiracy came together and, through an off-planet contact, hired Idiere, known to them only by the code name "Kharybdis", to kill Curero before he could officially withdraw the expedition.

Idiere accepted the job for 10 million Credits, intending to retire if he could carry it out successfully. He then, through the contact, sent a message to the conspirators instructing them to purchase two specifically modified Gauss Rifles (one extra to provide a backup) on Diavlo, break them into six components, and hand over one of each component in a sealed unbreakable container to couriers using his code name. Idiere also instructed his employers to rent a warehouse and apartment for his use. Upon arrival on Diavlo under a false identity, he picked up the names and addresses of the conspirators, the addresses of the apartment and warehouse, and the keys to the warehouse, apartment and containers from a starport locker. Idiere rented a hotel room and retired to plan the specifics of the operation. Under the identity of Kelton Amadiro, a week later, Idiere hired the PCs to deliver the components.

That same day, Kharybdis abandoned the identity he had come to Diavlo under, checking out, changing his disguise, and renting a new room in a different hotel. Several days later, Curero's speech was announced, and Idiere decided it was time to act. (Later investigation revealed that Curero did, indeed, intend to announce the withdrawal of the expedition to Avatol). He cased a hotel across from the public square where the speech was to take place, renting a room there under his present identity. Then, to secure a room from which to actually carry out the assassination, he stalked, killed, and disposed of a man named Simon Callon who was similar to himself in height and build and had a hotel room across from the square. Idiere then disposed of Callon's body and assumed his identity.

On the day of the speech, Idiere assembled the Gauss Rifle. He opaqued the room so that he could see out without others being able to see in. He then awaited the right moment. When Curero began to speak, he opened the window a crack, took aim, and killed Curero with his first shot. Unseen, he closed the window. An hour later, he changed disguises and went to the room he had rented under his previous identity. The next morning, disguised as Callon, Idiere, checked out of Callon's room and returned to his other room, changed his disguise back again, and burned Callon's identification.

Two days after the murder, Idiere made his first mistake. He disposed of the murder weapon improperly, and it was found by the authorities. This mistake, however, eventually worked to Idiere's advantage;the telescopic sight was recognized as a duplicate of the one found in the safe of the arrested gun smuggler, and this led to the stakeout of the apartment, and the arrest of the PC for the crime Idiere had committed.

Believing the search for the assassin was over, Idiere is, as the PCs begin their search, staying in the hotel from which he shot Curero, under the name Ash Sherrak. He has booked a seat on a ship leaving Diavlo at 1140 hours on the first day after the travel ban is lifted

THE SEARCH FOR KHARYBDIS

The exact structure of the adventure from this point on is left up to the GM. The mystery has been presented; the players have one week and almost twelve hours to follow the trail and locate the assassin.

It is suggested that the GM

allow the characters a certain number of hours per day to search, deducting the minimum necessary amount to rest. The players must then devise activities that they believe will bring them closer to solving the mystery. The GM tells them if the action is possible and, if so, how many hours it will take. If it is possible, the GM must make up a success roll to determine if the action is carried out successfully. If the action is successful, the GM reveals to the players any information that action would have realistically provided. Note that it is possible for an action to be successful and still yield no information, if the GM decides that such an action would have been useless in reality. The success roll should be more difficult if the action is more ambitious, and easier if the action would yield only a little information. The GM should make the success roll secretly, telling the players only what information (if any) they received, and not if the roll was made or not. If the players receive no information from any action, they may always try again. The required time is expended on an action whether it is successful or not; if it is tried again, the success roll and information available upon success is the same as before. Modifiers to the success roll should be based upon appropriate skills.

Following are a number of possible actions, with time required, success rolls, and information gained upon success. Together, all of these actions will lead to the solving of the mystery. The players must think of them themselves. However, the GM should not suggest actions, except perhaps one or two, through Alena Vernon. A particularly astute group of players may pick up almost all of them. Yet, it is possible to solve the mystery with some, all, or none of these actions. It is up to the GM whether the actions used by the players would realistically solve the mystery.

Interrogating the imprisoned conspirators will be of little use. All they know is that Kharybdis is not a native of Diavlo, and that he came to Diavlo from off-planet three weeks before the killing. (Time required: 3 hours. Success roll: 2+ on 2d6)

The PCs will be unable, should they search, to find any trace of any Kelton Amadiro in any starship, hotel, or other records. This will lead Det. Vernon to assume that Amadiro was Kharybdis in disguise, if the players have not reached this conclusion already. (5 hours; 2+)

A search of the records of all humans arriving on Diavlo for the last two months (Vernon will suggest this interval, to be safe), picking out all men of Amadiro's race, height, and general build from the starport computer records, will yield some 1,500 suspects. (6 hours; 3+)

A further search to determine which of the 1,500 have already left Diavlo and are therefore eliminated from suspicion, will narrow the field down to some 672 suspects. Of these, 115 are natives of Diavlo. This leaves 557 possible assassins. (5 hours; 5+)

A computer search of all hotel records in Azhiro to determine which of the 557 were in the city at the time of the assassination will reveal that only 192 of the 557 were in Azhiro when Curero was killed. This does not necessarily eliminate the others, as Vernon will point out; but it is easier to work with 192 with so little time. (6 hours; 5+)

Further research will reveal that only 19 of the 192 were staying in a hotel in the block surrounding the square in which Curero was shot. (2 hours; 3+)

Attempts to find and identify each one of the 19 will reveal that one of them, one Simon Callon of Dirot, checked out of his room several days ago and has not been seen; all others are still in their hotels. (5 hours; 5+)

A clerk on the morning shift in Callon's hotel (not able to be interviewed until the next morning) will say that he remembers Callon checking out and that, when the clerk inquired as to his destination with the travel ban still on, saying that he would be flying to the continent of Uar to conduct business. (1hour; 4+)

A search of the records of all flights from Azhiro to Uar will reveal no Simon Callon. (2 hours; 3+)

A search of the bodies found in Azhiro in the last month, will yield a corpse matching Callon's photo in the computer records in Azhiro starport exactly. The body was found just a few days ago and is currently frozen, awaiting transport to Dirot. The apparent cause of death was an overdose of a particularly effective depressant. (4 hours; 4+)

The remaining suspects are now 18 men who were staying in the hotel block in Azhiro on the day Curero was killed. Seven of the 18 are traveling with a companion, effectively eliminating them from suspicion.

Finally, a search of the starport reservation records will reveal that 5 of the 11 remaining suspects are scheduled to leave Azhiro starport for off-planet on the day the travel ban is lifted, as it is likely the assassin would. If the PCs have reached this point on their own, the GM may suggest through Det. Vernon the following plan. (2 hours; 4+)

The plan she suggests will be that the PCs and herself show up on the landing platform at each flight where a suspect is scheduled to leave in police uniforms, briefly interview stewards, crew members, etc., and begin to approach the suspect, hoping that he will panic and show himself.

The first suspect leaves at 700

hours, and will exhibit no unusual behavior when approached. The next two leave on the same flight at 920 hours, and will also exhibit no unusual behavior.

Ash Sherrak, or Arcon Idiere, is scheduled to leave at 1140 hours for Carona. Idiere will be at the main hatch about to board when the PCs appear. He will recognize them from their searches of the hotel recently and, when they begin to move toward him, he will draw the undetectable Auto Pistol he has concealed on his person and take two shots, one each at each of the PCs nearest him, and then run into the ship. The PC with the highest Agility may take one shot at him at -2 (42% unmodified chance to hit). If he is not brought down, Idiere will close and lock the hatch behind him, hijack the ship, and force the pilot to take him to Carona. If he is pursued by another ship, he will threaten to kill the passengers one by one unless the pursuit breaks off and return to the planet from which they came. At this point, Idiere has, by his actions, confessed to the assasination, according to Vernon, but will escape Diavlo unless felled by the first shot. If the players devise an alternate method of solving the mystery, the GM should try to bring them to a final duel with Idiere where he has a chance to escape to off-planet.

AFTER THE ADVENTURE

If the PCs have succeeded in locating Kharybdis, their accused compatriot will be freed after an official investigation of the matter prompted by Alena Vernon's testimony. There is no "false arrest" legislation on Diavlo, but the freed character will be awarded 200,000 Credits by the Council. If Kharybdis escapes unidentified, the arrested character will remain in prison indefinately.

There are a number of possible follow-ups to this adventure. If the PCs were unsuccessful in locating the true assassin, the next adventure could be an attempted jailbreak on behalf of the accused PC. If the characters locate Kharybdis and he escapes, they could pursue him and attempt to track him down all over again, or he could come after them because they can identify him. If Kharybdis is located and jailed, he could later escape (one of his specialties) and attempt to revenge himself upon them for being responsible for his imprisonment. In either case, the possibility exists for Kharybdis to be used as a recurring villain in the campaign.

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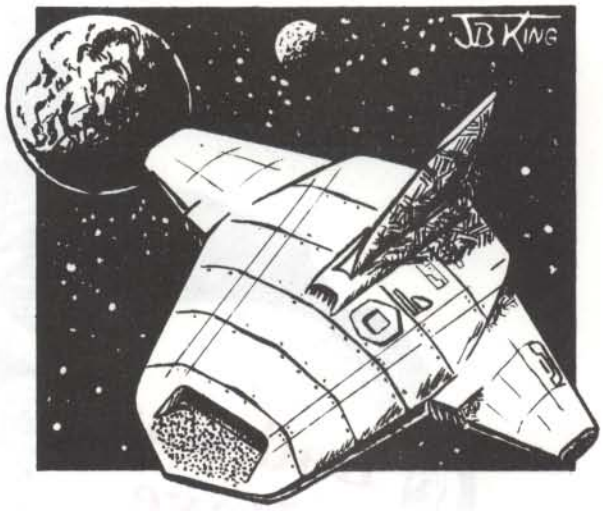
Circle Reader Service # 6

Ships of the Galaxy

Ranger Class Courier

by

James B. King



Traveller first saw the Ranger Class 100 ton courier when it made its debut to the space lanes over a decade ago as a commercial courier for a large, interstellar corporation. The ship was designed to meet the specific needs of particular business concerns, but has since proven its diversity in filling the requirements of many interests. Its aesthetic appearance and efficient performance have also helped to boost its popularity. The Ranger Class courier is now constructed at many quality ports as both a commercial courier and a private yacht.

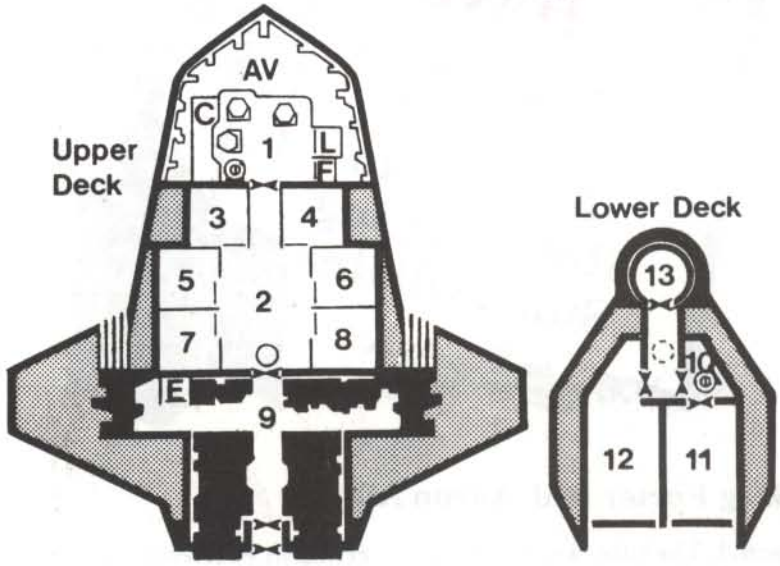
Interior description

1. Bridge. All ship system controls are located here. There are 3 control couches; however, only 1 pilot/navigator is required for routine ship operation. Also in the bridge section are the avionics (AV), the computer (C), a fresher for on duty personnel (F), and the ship's equipment locker (L). There is also an emergency hatch piercing the floor bulkhead.

2. Common Area. Recreation and food preparation areas are located here. An iris valve through the floor provides access to the lower deck.

3-8. Staterooms. These are single occupancy private quarters. Each contains a bunk, closet, sanitary facilities, a small desk and chair, and a computer terminal.

9. Engineering. The Jump and Maneuver Drives, Power Plant and Life Support are located here, as well as access to fuel scooping and delivery equipment. There is also an Engineer's Locker (E) and a stern air lock, primarily used to obtain easy access to outside fixtures.



10. Main Air Lock. Access to the ship is usually through this air lock. It opens to either the vehicle bay or the lower passage way.

11. Vehicle Bay. A small ship's vehicle is stored here, usually a simple air/raft.

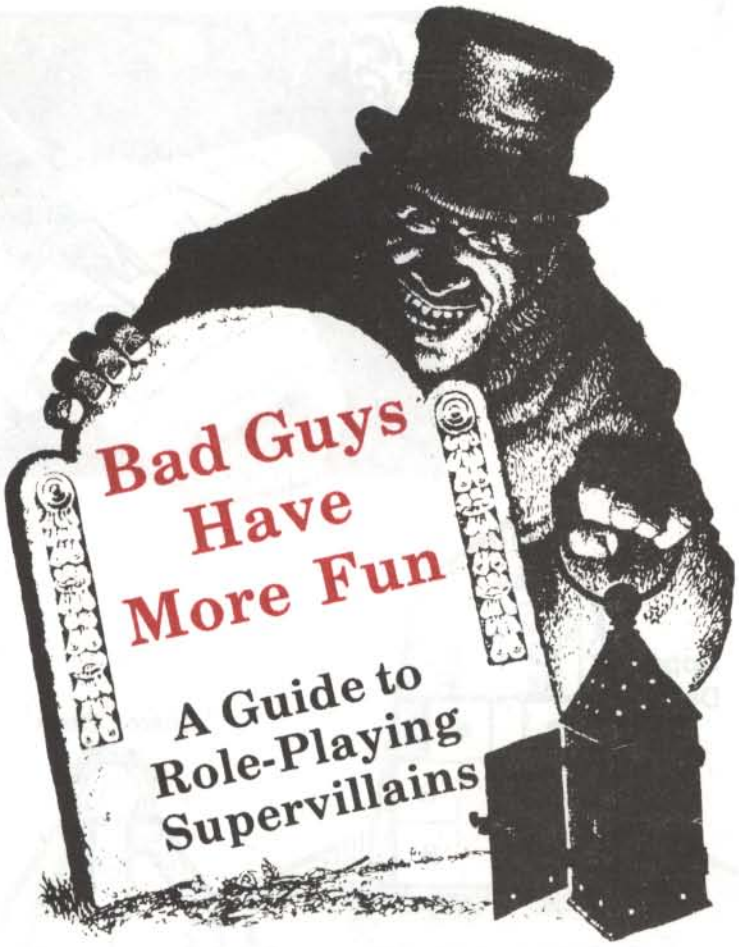
12. Cargo Bay. This small bay will hold 6 tons of cargo, including a second vehicle if it is desired.

13. Fire Control. This space is reserved for a turret and armaments, should they be installed.

The Ranger's modified wedge is fully streamlined and fuel scoops are installed. Fuel tankage surrounds most of both decks.

Ranger Courier Class

Displacement: 100 tons
Length: 28m.
Beam: 26m.
Hull Configuration:
Modified Wedge - Atmospheric Streamlining
Performance: 1G Accel. Jump-2
Computer: Model 1/bis
Hardpoints: 1
Crew: 1 Pilot/Navigator
Passengers: 5
Cargo: 6 tons
Ship's Vehicle: 1 air/raft
Fuel Tankage: 30 tons
Construction Cost: MCr 27.815
-standard design discount-



by Greg Porter and Aaron Allston

Face it: The title is right. Being rotten and mean is more fun than playing some namby-pamby, patriotic wimp named Captain Freedom, or some brick named Ugulus who gets enraged whenever he hears a cry for help.

Wouldn't you rather be Stauron, alien, mutant master of time and space, rightful ruler of the planet Earth? What do heroes do, anyway, besides sit around the base, attend charity functions, and stop bad guys?

NOTHING... that's what. Well, some of them have to work for a living. Big deal... Someone always has to be at Central, in case the villains try to take over the city, hold the country for blackmail, or do something else that makes property values drop and the politicians scream. Being a hero can also put a crimp in your vacation plans.

Villains, on the other hand... They get to do anything they want, or at least try to. Heroes, you know that smart-alec Public defender who got your captured villain off on a technicality? Even after you nearly died trying to catch him? Remember the lawsuit for property damage? You can't do a thing to the PD because you're on his side. However, if you were a villain, and you escaped, the judge, prosecuting attorney, jury, and all their relatives would be fair game.

Being a villain is never having to say you're sorry, even for using worn-out cliches.

You also have a more flexible schedule. If you want to kick back and go to the Bahamas, no sweat. You don't have a city full of ingrates to defend. Take off whenever you want to. It's also more lucrative. Bank jobs and extortion are so easy, and so much fun it's hard to stop. Taking over and setting yourself up as absolute dictator also has a certain appeal.

Creating the Villain Player-Character

Being the perfect villain takes a bit of work; let's start at the beginning.

CONCEPTION

You have to start somewhere, and this is it. What kind of villain will you be, and why? An insane druggie with strange mental powers who thinks he is Napoleon? A crazed scientist in a battle suit who wants glory and recognition of his genius? A mutated human guinea pig who seeks revenge on a humanity he is no longer a part of? The list goes on and on.

Sit down and figure out a background for your character before even trying to design him. A brief history does wonders when it comes time for Disadvantages. Remember, the character is a villain, and needs an overwhelming reason to be one. Vengeance, insanity, glory, greed, conquest... all these are valid.

POWERS AND ATTRIBUTES

This is not too different than designing a hero character. Once the conception is down, figuring out powers and stats should not be too much of a problem.

One difference in powers is that villains usually have less regard for property and use less heroic powers in general. Killing Attacks, Body Drains, explosions, etc, are more easily used by a villain. What do you care if your explosion takes out a nearby orphanage or fries a few bystanders? What are they going to

do, sue you?

Standard supervillain theory holds that villains are inherently more limited than heroes, so you may wish to put a few extra limitations on a power. (GMs: This means that you should take an active part in making sure that player-character villains take some appropriately villainous limitations on their powers and abilities.)

Example: Radon, atom test mutant, has a Body Drain that uses radiation as a special effect. It would be quite appropriate to have some sort of limitation based on radiation placed on this power.

DISADVANTAGES

Villains are usually more powerful than individual heroes, meaning the heroes have to use team efforts, cooperation, overall goodness, and other outdated concepts to beat one.

To balance their powers, villains should have lots of nasty disadvantages, and they should be more severe than those of their hero counterparts.

The best way to do this is for the player to create his villain's powers and stats, and give them to the GM with a list of disadvantages he wishes the character to have. The GM then goes through the list and assigns the Disadvantages' points to balance the character.

In *Champions* or any point-based system, the GM could simply assign points to the Disadvantages and then upgrade them until the Disadvantage Total equals the Power total.

You have to be careful when doing Disadvantages, just as with a hero character. If a character is hunted by the police, make sure that the police can inconvenience or hurt the character.

If the villain is a brick who stops cannon shells without flinching, police .38s aren't much of a problem for him. Hence, this isn't much of a disadvantage. Now, if you make it the SWAT team and give them bazookas, you may have something.

Make sure that the villains have a few overpowering Disadvantages, like extreme psychological problems or weaknesses in their defenses. This also fits in with the villain genre and keeps the characters on their toes.

A really nasty, and therefore appropriate, thing to do is not tell the villains how bad their Disadvantages are. The GM returns the player's sheet with an incomplete and undetailed list of the character's Disadvantages, and the character will only learn the true extent of his problems in the course of playing.

FOR INSTANCE:

Player: "What do you mean I've got a 2D6 BODY Susceptibility to moon dust?"

GM: "Well, you wanted a Susceptibility to extraterrestrial objects."

Player: "But...but..."

You get the idea.

Setting up the Villain Campaign

There are several ways to set up and run player-character villains in a campaign. For example:

PLAYER-CHARACTER VILLAINS, NPC HEROES

This is the easiest campaign for a GM: The Earth is a typical world with superheroes and supervillains, but all the player-characters are villains. The villains pursue their own goals, coordinate and execute spectacular crimes, perform acts of villainy and vengeance on society and superheroes. Good, clean. amoral fun.

There are, however, limitations inherent in this type of campaign. For instance, to keep the world similar to normal comic book worlds the heroes must often catch and foil the villains. Since the villains are the player-characters, the hero NPCs will have to have unfair advantages to do this. And this can result in frustration for the villain player-character.

But if you avoid that frustration by allowing the villains to win at the rate they'll deserve to, the heroes will usually just play a holding action, momentarily keeping the villains at bay. Villains get all the action, and will eventually win... They are, after all, the player-characters.

What if the villains win? You saw *Superman II*. Once you've gained total victory, things get kind of boring. You can't just switch sides and start playing heroes, out to rid the world of your other characters. For starters, you know all the Disadvantages of the villains, which gives you an unfair advantage.

Also, by this time, the villains may have such an elaborate network of agents and supporters that it would be nearly impossible to root them all out.

In any case,the GM will find it difficult to keep such a villain group together. With no unifying goal, they'll trigger each other's psychological limitations until they kill one another or go their separate ways. One unifying goal, for instance, is a master plan to conquer the world, or to achieve some other spectacular success which can only occur if the characters cooperate; only the unified use of their special powers can bring off this plan.

But even if you have a unifying goal, one that keeps the villains working together despite their egocentric, narrowminded viewpoints, there arises the problem of what to do when the goal is reached.

The answer to that question is obvious: Become Supreme Leader. Once the Master Plan is realized, the villains will all want to take control. When this eventually happens, there will be a fight to the finish between the various factions, until one bruised and battered victor emerges.

That character can be the 'winner' of the campaign. The GM then closes it up and goes back to normal hero role-playing, perhaps using the aftermath of that previous campaign as a starting point.

THE NPC MASTER VILLAIN

One way to keep the PC villains together and extend the campaign is to have the characters be subordinate to an NPC villain, one powerful enough to defeat several of them at once, one with the will and leadership to hold a band of superpowered psychotics together. This master villain can call the shots and make the plans, while the characters do the dirty work.

Once again, the thought on all minds will be, "How can I knock this guy off and take his position?"

The role of superheroes in this campaign will be to foil plans, capture the player-characters, and generally be a pain in the neck to the forces of evil.

When heroes capture villains, the GM has an excuse to have them find out the player-character's plans. Captured villains also serve as prisoner exchange pawns, since there will certainly be captured heroes.

NO HEROES

The two campaign structures above can also be run in a world where there are no significant superheroes. Yes, the same atomic mutants and magic and other forces are at work on this world... but everyone who gained powers from them has become a villain, or at least criminally neutral.

The characters should be built with smaller-scale attacks and defenses. In the 8d6 damage and 15-20 defense range, so they'll actually have to work a little bit when confronted with masses of police or army forces.

In this campaign, the player-character villain group acts in competition with the numerous NPC villain groups. They meet and fight much as heroes and villains do, but the kid gloves are off and only villainy is in the air.

PLAYER-CHARACTER VILLAINS AND HEROES

Now, some people don't want to be villains, but I hear they're working on a cure..

This leads to a hero/villain campaign, in which some players are heroes and some are villains. If the two sides are unequal, the GM may balance the lighter side with NPCs.

In this campaign, the two groups play at the same time, but stay in separate parts of the play area or house until they appear at the same place and conduct combat.

Since the players have taken over the villain roles, the GM has less combat bookkeeping. However, the groups must be run separately, so the GM does have the added complexity of keeping track of everyone's plans and coordinating events for maximum dramatic effect.

Though it might seem boring at first to just sit around while the GM confers with the other group, the players should take this opportunity to make plans of their own, thus saving time later on.

This is also more fun for the GM, since, instead of designing elaborate plots and trying not to use his knowledge of the characters unfairly, he can sit back and snicker as both sides plot against each other while only he knows what is truly going on.

OCCASIONAL PC VILLAINS

A worst-case scenario is that no one really wants to be a villain. What do we do then?

Here are a few suggestions:

(1) A player-character hero can be secretly captured by the villains and replaced by a villainous exact double. Have the double portrayed by the same player; tell him what he does and does not know about the real hero; be sure to choose a player who'll be agreeable and have fun while this is going on.

(2) A player-character can be captured and brainwashed or have some sort of radiation/magic accident so that he temporarily gains a criminal mentality. (Remember Red Kryptonite?) This works much like the "PC Villains and Heroes" approach above, except that the character will be opposed and hunted by his own teammates, who must exercise special care when combatting him... They won't want to hurt him, though he is operating under no such restrictions.

(3) When a player is present but his character cannot be involved, give him an NPC villain to play. The player has to be careful not to abuse his knowledge of the heroes, but a watchful GM can make sure of that. The player might rather be on the other side of the battle, but

Experience

Game-Masters: With time, your villains will get better (or should I say worse?) -- more powerful. As usual, this is done through Experience. Here is a general guide to experience bonuses for villains.

ACTION	EXPERIENCE
Villain Played In Character	Normal
Villain Played Out of Character	Penalty
Villain Passed Up Opportunity to Ruin Someone's Day	Penalty
Villain Played Excellently In Character	Bonus
Villain Used Unethical Means to Gain Objectives	Bonus
Villain Put Own Goals Ahead of Group (Without Getting Caught)	Bonus
Villain Gained in Power at the Expense of Someone Else	Bonus
Villain Inconvenienced Himself to Make Life Miserable for Someone Else	Bonus
Villain Was Involved in Long Adventure	Bonus
Villain Made Excellent Decisions or Deductions	Bonus

being an active villain beats sitting on the sidelines for the hours it may take for a hero character to get involved. Additionally, the villain is likely to be more effective when played by a player with nothing else on his mind... GMs, who run several characters at the same time, often find those characters aren't as effective and inventive as characters run by just one person.

PLAYING THE VILLAIN

Villains aren't just heroes with black capes. The earlier note about villain powers extends beyond mere powers and stats--you've got to portray the villain in terms of his villainous reactions and villainous tactics.

VILLAINOUS TACTICS

Sneaky, underhanded, lowdown, and merciless are good descriptions for villain tactics on and off the combat field.

When playing the villain, you've got to take what you know about your hero enemies and use it to make their lives miserable.

If a hero has a code to protect the innocent, lob a few fireballs at some bystanders. He'll be forced to help them, which keeps him out of combat for a while.

If you can drive someone berzerk, do so when a friendly is in his path.

Double-team enemies; it makes things easier for you and harder for them.

Remember that you have little concern for property damage (other than your own). If objects can be used to your advantage, use them. If that bus makes a dandy club, don't hesitate to break it over someone's head.

Remember that even minor powers can be used to devastating effect against heroes. Mind-control normals to run right in front of you. No real hero will launch his devastating Mega-Beam at you if a little old lady is in the way. You, on the other hand, can just look over her shoulder and let fly with impunity.

And the most important thing of all: You Are Most Important. Don't hesitate to let someone take flak for you. You can snicker under your mask as you apologize later.

VILLAIN DIALOGUE

When playing a villain, chew up the scenery with your melodramatic overreactions and responses. Don't pass up a single opportunity to let one of your psychological limitations trigger in a messy way. Gloat whenever the hero is hurt. Humiliate him whenever possible. Occasionally drop hints as to your master plan.

If captured, don't hesitate to:

(1) Rant and rave
(2) Go berserk a few times
(3) Scream that your comrades will get revenge
(4) Let out more hints about your master plan
(5) Sulk
(6) Plan your escape

EXPERIENCE

Game-Masters: With time, your villains will get better (or should I say worse?) more powerful. As usual, this is done through Experience.

D&D GOES EAST WITHOUT ORIENTAL ADVENTURES

By Ronald Mark Pehr

TSR recently released **Oriental Adventures,** a set of rules for running their AD&D game in an Oriental milieu. However, the Orient - real and in the worlds of fantasy - is a big place. While **Oriental Adventures** will doubtless be a hit with AD&D players looking for new worlds to conquer, one of these worlds already exists...under a different set of rules. FGU's **Bushido** portrays heroic fantasy adventure on the legendary Isle of Nippon; a place that would have existed if medieval Japan contained mythical creatures, magic, and as many fearless warriors as can be found in samurai movies. **Bushido** presents a rich world background for fantasy role-play adventures. Moreover, it is a good game in its own right, with coherent, playable rules.

An on-going **Bushido** campaign might be a fascinating place for already-existing "Occidental" AD&D characters to visit. Players seeking adventure on the mist-shrouded, mysterious Isle of Nippon won't have to totally create the Orient and roll-up new types of characters from **Oriental Adventures.** What they can do is convert their current characters into the local equivalents of **Bushido** characters for the duration of their visit, playing under **Bushido** rules but with their own, beloved characters. This article presents a few charts to allow this.

Nippon society is very rigid, social classes and customs are very strictly defined and enforced. This includes character classes, a person who could not be identified by the local inhabitants as belonging to a recognizable character class could not deal with them in any sort of social setting.

CHARACTER CLASS EQUIVALENTS

Bushido	Paladin or Ranger
Samurai	Fighter, Dwarf, Half-Orc,
Ronin	Half-Elf
Budoka	Monk
Shungenja	Magic-User, Illusionist,
Gakusho	Elf
Ninja	Cleric, Druid
Yakuza	Thief, Assassin, Hobbit

Split-class D&D/AD&D characters may exercise their different character class skills, but while in Nippon they must be considered to be one class or another; they gain experience only in that class even if using skills belonging to the other class. The non-Human characters have **Bushido** character classes appropriate to their skills, weapons and accoutrements, and how their mannerisms would imply their professions. For example, Half-Orcs would tend to swagger and bluster, Elves to be quiet and mysterious, etc. As a practical matter, in a country where Elves, Dwarves and Hobbits are not known, they might be viewed as deformed, or disguised animals, or spirits. Yakuza belong to an organized criminal gang, obviously the visitors aren't members so there is no Yakuza equivalent for any of the character classes. However, if the characters have Level 0 retainers or hirelings apparently capable of fighting, these might be thought to be Yakuza.

Samurai have a social status transcending their warrior skills, Technically, no outsider could instantly be considered samurai (although they might have the honor bestowed upon them later). However, because Paladins and Rangers serve higher causes, and have unique abilities which would certainly impress the local populace, they might be considered "foreign samurai."

Magic-using characters can still ply their arts in Nippon, provided

they've brought their spell memorization books. Presume spells have the effects the characters expect, Charm spells charm people, Bless spells confer +1, Illusions appear real, etc., but use **Bushido** mechanics to regulate when and how the spells are actually cast. Since they have the intellectual ability and the basic training, visiting magic-users can be taught the magic of Nippon in the same manner as a local Shungenja.

Clerics and Druids can employ their magic but are going to be unable to learn the ways of the Gakusho since they have totally different religions. They will be thought of by those they encounter as Buddhist and Shinto, respectively, unless they vehemently deny it. They would then be considered some strange sort of Shungenja.

In order to play the D&D/AD&D charaters in Nippon, their vital statistics must be converted into **Bushido** stats. This applies to either D&D or AD&D (for purposes of this article they may be considered the same.) Equivalents are:

Bushido	D&D
Strength	Strength
Deftness	Dexterity
Wit	Intelligence
Will	Wisdom
Health	Constitution

Charisma of the visitors has no equivalent. Outsiders are simply too different in appearance, and too ignorant of the nuances of social interaction to gain the benefits of high Charisma and their very differences will probably mask the effects of low Charisma - the bad manners visitors will display through ignorance will be counterbalanced by their obvious strangeness. Nipponese will be awed, interested, or repelled depending on the situation, regardless of how the adventurer would have come across to others in his own milieu by virtue of a special Charisma rating.

In original D&D, all weapons did D6 damage. This will put such characters at some disadvantage in **Bushido**, original D&D players should use the **Greyhawk** damage system, other D&D/AD&D versions can use their listed weapon ratings. The visitors can certainly use Nippon weapons appropriate to their character classes, such will use **Bushido** ratings.

Any special attributes of the weapons, or unique ways of employment, will not be automatically known, visitors must learn these individually according to normal **Bushido** weapon training rules.

continued on page 30

NUMERICAL EQUIVALENTS

ARMOR CLASS EQUIVALENTS

Bushido	D&D	AD&D
0	9	10
1	8	9
2	7	8
3	6	7
4	5	6
5	4	5
6	3	4
7	2	3

WILL/HEALTH WISDOM/CONSTITUTION

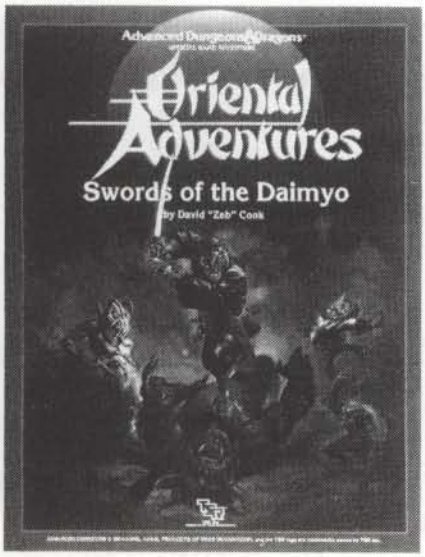
Bushido	D&D
2-3	3
4-10	2-10
11-12	11
13-14	12
15-16	13
17-20	14
21-25	15
26-30	16
31-35	17
36-40	18

DEXTERITY/INTELLIGENCE DEFTNESS/WIT

D&D	Bushido
3	2-7
4	8-9
5	10-11
6	12-13
7	14-15
8	16-17
9	18-19
10	20-21
11	22-23
12	24-25
13	26-27
14	28-29
15	30-31
16	32-33
17	34-35
18-18:25	36-37
18:26-18:50	38
18:51-18:75	39
1876+	40

STRENGTH

Bushido	D&D
2-4	3
5	4
6-7	5
8	6-7
9	8
10	9-10
11	11
12-13	12
14-15	13
16-17	14
18-19	15
20-24	16
25-29	17
30-35	18-18:75
36-40	18:76+



AH, SO DESU KA?

Oriental Adventures for the AD&D Game

by Michael Mullen

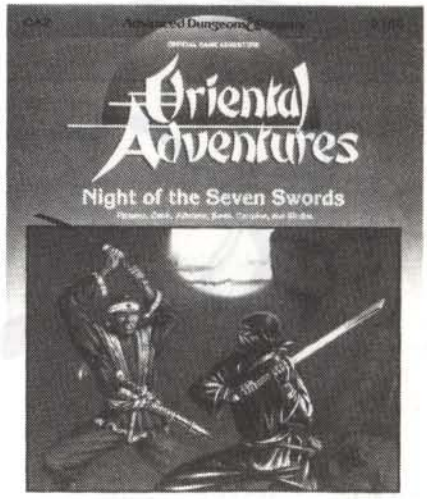
With Oriental Adventures and, at the time, three modules, the world of **Advanced Dungeons and Dragons** has undergone a major expansion. A whole new world (or at least a continent) has opened up for players. The framework for the expansion is detailed in a major rulebook, while the first module (OA1, what else?) provides a map for the continent and a detailing of one of the major play areas.

The rulebook contains new races, 8 new character classes, two that have undergone heavy revisions. A new monetary system, new armor, new weapons, and of course, new spells are all laid out. Even more, a system for dealing with the social differences between the Oriental and Occidental cultures has been detailed, and there are some additions of campaign and combat aids which most DMs should welcome.

Of the modules, OA1 "The Swords of the Daimyo" is necessary to running a campaign in this world setting since it gives the continent map. It also details an entire province and gives a background for one of the five major divisions of the world. It is worth looking at also for the method of approach to detailing a province. OA2 "Night of the Seven Swords" details another province in the original area and gives a nifty "haunted house" adventure. OA3 "Ochimo, the Spirit Warrior" gives the timeline for another major section of the world, and has an island scenario that introduces some aspects of the mainland culture.

The general theme of the material draws heavily upon the culture of Japan for its flavor and inspiration. The character classes and some of the other aspects of the game are biased towards this point of view, but given the relative accessibility of supplemental material in making an ongoing campaign, this is a good decision for the Game Master.

The game area detailed, called Kara-Tur, draws inspiration from several historical epochs, although the fantasy setting modifies it. The first area introduced is Kozakura, which is based on Japan during the early feudal era and the period of the struggle for the Shogunate, the Sengoku (similar to most of the Samurai movies and James Clavel's *Shogun*). This is an island culture, with a geographic setting similar to Japan. Another island kingdom, Wa (which ironically, is the Japanese word for 'Peace') is drawn from the later era of the Tokagawa Shogunate or, perhaps, from the



earlier Kamakura period of the Japanese culture, an era noted for its dictatorial government which ruled with brutal efficiency. The mainland areas are detailed for Chinese cultures. The Shou Lung area is drawn from the eras which had a centralized state ruled more by the emperor and the central bureaucracy (Chin, Han, Sung, Ming dynasties) and the T'u Lung area for those times when the local feudal lords and bureaucrats held more power (Shang & Chou Dynasties, Chan-Kuo or Warring States period, T'ang Dynasty). There are also two areas that are not detailed, the Plain of Horses for Mongol type barbarians, and a rather vast jungle area to the south for Indo-Chinese cultures.

To adventure in these areas the players assume the roles of Bushi (Fighters), Kensai (Weapon Masters), Samurai (Cavaliers), Shukenja (Clerics), Sohei (Fighter-Clerics), Wu Jen (Magic Users), Yakuza (Gangster, re, Thief), Ninja (Lawful Assassins), Monks, and "Oriental Barbarians. Within a more Chinese style campaign, one might want to delete the Kensai or make him a type of monk, while the abbreviated list of spells given to the Sohei might be expanded to include some other Shukenja spells.

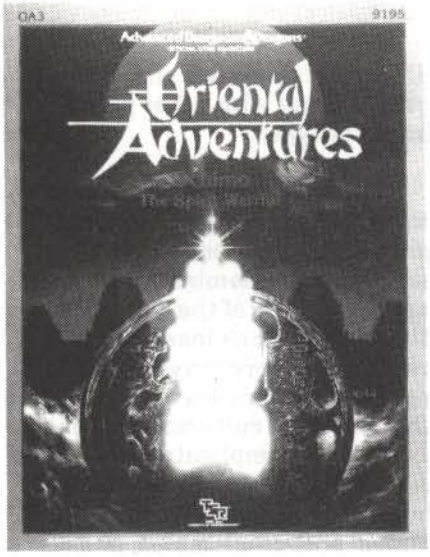
The characters learn to adventure with an eye towards not

only experience, but also to points of Honor and with regard to family (in most classes). This is one of the major differences that give the Oriental game its flavor. Although the strictness of these concepts in the major system reflect the Japanese setting of the first modules, they were not altogether without meaning in the Chinese cultures either. This is a system which more directly rewards playing the proper role of a character and can be enjoyable for the player, too. However, for a total loss of honor, the penalty is loss of the character (seppuku, or ritual suicide, is the atonement alloted by the game system).

This system introduced the concept of non-weapon proficiencies, brought to the regular game of AD&D in the *Dungeoneer's Survival Guide* and the *Wilderness Survival Guide*. The concept fits well in a society where a man is rewarded for being well-rounded and where considerable renown is given to a warrior for his more cultural contributions. Several Samurai are known for their poetic and other skills, and one of the most famous, Miamoto Mushashii (who invented a style of fencing) is known today primarily through a book of philosophy, *The Book of Five Rings*.

Notice in the Oriental rules that there is no difference between weapon and non-weapon proficiencies. This means that the player must cheese his character's interests carefully. As a DM. I have frequently given honor points (and penalties) for the choice of non-weapon or weapon skills when advancement has been gained by players, depending on their class.

However, there is a notable omission from the Proficiency Table on pg. 51. The Monk, which has been taken from the normal AD&D rules into the Oriental section, is omitted. The Monk begins with 5 proficiency slots and gains one per



level, although he has the advantage of gaining his martial arts style "free".

Speaking of martial arts, the rules covering martial arts give an alternate to the "weaponless combat" rules of the standard game, and one that can be grafted into the standard game. The rules leave out certain maneuvers which followers of the martial arts may notice (particularly fans of Judo and Akido) but on the whole the rules work well in a game system. I do make one recommendation to those using the system: that a character, in order to use a "special" attack maneuver, must give up at least one normal attack. This is a minimum, there are several instances where the form of attack specifies that it is the only action which can be taken.

The initial module, "Swords of the Daimyo" provides a large province and several other worth while items for the DM, and three loosely connected mini-adventures. The first is a means of getting a set of traditional characters to the new area of their world. The second is a raid on a peasant village (shades of the Seven Samurai) although there is some confusion as to how many bad guys are doing the raiding. The third adventure is for the characters when they gain more experience, presumably by exploring the rest of the province. (Although the details of those adventures aren't given, there is plenty enough background material to make the individual encounters easy.) This gives the party a chance to avenge the village humiliated in the second adventure and explore a temple at the same time.

The second module, "Night of the Seven Swords" adds a province although it is not as filled with details as the one in the first module. The territory is more isolated and less populated, however. The main story of this module, recovering a relic from a haunted castle, is well constructed and the adventure challenging. There is a real nasty new monster here, too.

The third module, "Ochimo, the Spirit Warrior" serves as a moderate introduction to the more Chinese elements of the world, and gives a background timeline of the major mainland civilization. Suggested for characters of level 5-7, (seven pre-rolled characters are provided) you may find that the players should bring characters towards the upper end of that scale, or maybe even levels 7-9. The players face some major opposition, and well played, there should be few characters left standing at the end of the adventure.

So, will you like playing in the world of Kara-Tur? Probably. Just how much depends on what you come looking for and for the inventiveness of your DM, and/or his familiarity with Oriental cultures. If your DM is familiar with Japanese movies, or television, or is very well read in the subjects, you will probably have a lot more fun than otherwise. For my home campaign, I have invented a large city within which several mysteries have been solved by a character known to my players as the "Samurai Judge", but in many instances a DM might not have as much source material to hand.

It also depends on which particular fantasy you are familiar with, or whether you watch, for example, *Seven Samurai* or *Baby Cart From Hell* when you go to the Saturday afternoon slice-em-up films. Fans of the wilder Karate and/or Yakuza films may find the system, as presented, a bit tame or restrictive.

The system, however, is well balanced for playing. Relatively little fixing needs to be done to the rules as they stand, to have a very enjoyable campaign. It should be noted that the system is not truely "stand alone" and that the DMG and Player's Handbook will still be handy to have around. There is an especially good opportunity for inter-player and player-DM interaction in the various classes as presented. The player's characters will most often be working against, or interfacing with,other player-character types.

The usual opposition, if not human, will be with those of the spirit world. This once again is a mark of the predominately Japanese flavor of the system (Shintoism) but as more modules are worked, there may be other types of monsters drawn in from the other Oriental cultures. There is also a fairly complicated ranking of undead, and "demons". Several of the familiar monsters are on the random encounter tables, and more could be incorporated if the campaign develops that way. Some of the really Western monsters, such as the Minotaurs, etc., really don't fit in, but this is a matter for judgement on the part of the players and the DM.

I have found that the normal characters from AD&D will fit in fairly well, although I would recommend caution for those who have a campaign featuring Oriental characters in introducing a Magic-user of any considerable rank. The AD&D magic spells are much more powerful, and their use in many instances would be opposed to the Oriental approach that makes magic more a matter of philosophy than an exercise in power.

On the whole, I think that the system is worth the cost and effort.Especially for AD&D players who want a change of pace from their normal campaign. So order up that take-out Sushi, get your friends, and explore the new worlds. However, don't be surprised if you need more after a couple of gaming sessions.

D&D Goes East

continued from page 27

Higher (numerically lower) D&D/AD&D armor exceeds the protection offered by even the best local armor in Nippon, one of the few advantages outsiders will have. The table above may be extended indefinitely for field plate, mithral plate, etc., to confer appropriate defense on heavily armored outsiders in a **Bushido** melee. Magic "plusses," Robes of Protection, etc., confer their advantages by similarly increasing the equivalent **Bushido** armor class. Encumberance of enchanted armor is only that of the basic armor grade. A +3 shield = D&D AC 5 = **Bushido** AC 4, it encumbers in a **Bushido** melee as **Bushido** AC 1.

With any luck, adventurers won't arrive in Nippon totally without funds. D&D coins weigh twice as much as **Bushido** coins of the same metal. Assuming natives can be persuaded to accept foreign money: copper pieces are worth the same, D&D silver pieces are worth only 2/3, D&D gold pieces are worth only 1/2.

Visitors earn experience points as any other **Bushido** character, and can gain **Bushido** levels of experience. They keep experience points earned in Nippon when they return to their own worlds, but do not automatically advance a D&D level if they gained a level in **Bushido**. Although the **Bushido** level increase doesn't carry over, characters may still advance a level if the **Bushido** experience points earned happen to be enough to raise their level according to experience points needed. ON earned in Nippon can be used by outsiders as well as natives but the visitors cannot take it back with them.

D&D characters entering Nippon will be at a **Bushido** level equivalent to their column on the combat matrix. Pro-rate experience needed for all the D&D levels in the column.

SPACEGAMER
FantasyGamer
IS BACK

Space Gamer / Fantasy Gamer magazine is returning well in time for Christmas, and with so much to herald, we want to make sure you get the right gift! Space Gamer magazine has been published for eleven years, and has served Science-Fiction and Fantasy gaming fans faithfully through the years. It is a magazine with a long history, an outstanding reputation, and now it's having a glorious rebirth.

The new Space Gamer / Fantasy Gamer magazine will be appearing in stores and mailboxes throughout the land by December. Issue number 77 will mark a new era of creativity for one of the longest-published magazines in the hobby.

The new Editor is Anne Jaffe, formerly of Game News magazine. Anne is not only one of the industry's most qualified (and esteemed) editors, she is also energetic, organized, devoted, punctual, and has a great eye for the details that make all of the difference in a quality magazine product.

The new Art Director is Vince DeNardo, currently Art Director for both Fire & Movement and Computer Gaming World magazines. Vince is giving Space Gamer / Fantasy Gamer a new look, dynamically improved over previous issues, and an advance for all magazines of this genre.

Even the publisher is giving you more with the new Space Gamer / Fantasy Gamer. An increase in size from 48 to 64 pages (while still keeping the current cover price) is one heck of a fine gesture. They're not stopping there, however, because this notice also includes the following new subscriber deal:

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THE DRAGON and the PRINCESS

by Dave Friedland

IT WOULD BE A FIGHT TO REMEMBER

Yo! Treasure seeker! Tired of the everyday world of dungeon cleansing and orc bashing? Why not convert your stout-hearted adventurers into their more comedic selves and send them up against a group of goop-gun wielding necromancers or demon fast food restaurant workers? Welcome to "Stupid Fantasy 101"... A new horizon for the ever popular role playing game...TEENAGERS FROM OUTER SPACE...

Perhaps the oldest and mind-bogglingly, overused, fantasy soap opera of all time revolves around an overgrown winged lizard who kidnaps a beautiful but scatterbrained princess, causing a number of even more scatterbrained adventures to grab up various damage producing devices and go hunting for honor and glory. It's only fitting that we reduce the whole genre to a few paragraphs and make it stupid!

THE STORY

Princess Chameuse has been kidnapped by the evil dragon Miasma. Her father, the king, has offered a lucrative reward (hot stock options in the King's new chain of theme dungeons plus the obligatory "daughter's hand in marriage") to the brave souls who can retrieve her. Last night, having had a little too much to drink, the players signed a contract to undertake the task.

CONVERTING YOUR CHARACTERS

Most Roleplaying systems use a 3D6 system. T.F.O.S. uses a 1D6 system. Just follow these handy guidelines....

Int. divided by 3 = **Smarts**
Str. + Dx divided by 6 = **Bod**
Chr + Wis divided by 6 = **R.W.P.**
Roll 1D6 = **Luck**
Dx + Int divided by 6 = **Driving**
Chr divided by 3 = **Looks**
Str + Wis divided by 6 = **Cool**
Con divided by 3 = **Bonk**

Now, that wasn't hard, was it? If you have one of those "El Grosso" characters with stats above 18, go ahead and make the converted stat above the 6 maximum allowed in *T.F.O.S.* After all, who really cares anyway? The state of **Driving** covers everything from riding horses and war rabbits to flying spells and rental carpets. The **R.W.P.** (relationship With Parents) stat can also apply to the character's relation to their lord, king, church, demon,god, or whatever.

TRAITS

Every character in *Stupid Fantasy* must choose three traits which describe his personality and world view... such as, "Lives for the unmitigated joy of combat" or "Likes painting watercolor nudes of elf maidens". This isn't as hard as you might think. Just consider a few words that might normally describe your fantasy character (heroic, handsome, and wise) and then exaggerate (poses in front of mirrors, signs autographs whenever possible, and thinks he knows it all).

SAMPLE CHARACTERS

Bob'n (Dwarf of the Whippersnapper Mts.)

Smarts:	**2**
Bod:	**6**
Luck:	**3**
Rwp:	**4**
Driving:	**3**
Looks:	**4**
Cool:	**5**
Bonk:	**7**

Knacks:

Chop enemies into hamburger with Axe +5, ignore the effects of alchohol +2, clobber anyone who makes "short" jokes +1

Powers:

Incredible Moxie: (adds +2 to Bob's ability to resist fear and intimidation).

Traits:

Likes to fight, likes to drink, narrow minded. Bob is a tough little guywho takes lip from no one. He fights hard and drinks hard, and doesn't see many avenues in life. His goal is to someday become King of the Whippersnapper Mountains.

WHAT TO DO WITH THOSE PESKY LEVELS

Levels. Everyone has some. Some have more than others. Some have entirely too many. In *Stupid Fantasy* we ignore levels altogether. But don't throw them into the disposal until just yet. You can use your levels to buy nifty things for your character, such as knacks, powers and spells, and magic items.

Knacks in *Stupid Fantasy* are something like skills but with no limit on how bizarre or ridiculous they can be. For each level your character has, you may purchase one level in knack, up to a maximum of 6 in any single knack. You may, of course, purchase any knack your twisted mind can devise,

but we suggest that for best results, they parody the character's skills and abilities. A dwarven fighter might wish to purchase such knacks as "Swing Axe", "Down Kegs of Ale", and "Creative Beard Design". An evil mage might want such handy skills as "Launch Fireballs Accurately", "Laugh Maniacally", and "Backstab Heroic Dwarven Fighters Like the One Described Above". The possibilities are almost endless.

POWERS & SPELLS

Powers are like any heroic or innate abilities which the character possesses. A werewolf might have 'Shapechange' as a power. A Barbarian might have 'Super Strength' or 'Fun Like Heck'. All powers and spells cost three levels to buy. This may sound hard on poor, defenseless first level characters, but never fear, every character gets one special power or ability for free. This ability should be something associated with the character's class or personality. Some examples:

Fighters: **Super Strength.** So that they can act like Conan and wrestle ogres, etc.

Mages: **Fireball.** The classic damage producing spell. Does 2 bonk, and chars clothing.

Clerics: **Restore Bonk.** Heal spell. restores 2 Bonk.

Thieves: **Nimblefingers.** Adds +2 to their Bod when doing sneaky things and lets them get away with stuff that other characters would not have a prayer of pulling off.

Politicians: **Incredible Influence** Allows the player to overawe everyone else with heroic speeches. Good way to deal with overly powerful enemies. A failed influence roll will probably get the character lynched or elected president of the United States.

Spells are bought in the same way as powers, but tend to have a wider range of effects and side effects. Although it would be impossible to buy every spell that a character might cast, the *Stupid Fantasy* spell user should choose one or two spells to become his or her trademark. You can convert spells from your favorite FRP, or make up your own. In general, you should use something we have dubbed the "2 Effect" to figure out just what a spell or power can do.

The **"2 Effect"** says that all spells will do two of something when they go off. This could be two bonk of damage, two bonk restored, having the enemy buried in two tons of marshmallows or reduced to a **Smarts** of one for two turns, etc. This will keep even the most outlandish spell from getting too powerful. For example:

Einstein's Enigmatic Eradication:

This spell, when cast successfully (a Bod roll), will produce a colorful nuclear mushroom cloud over a wide area of the battlefield, but will leave the character relatively unharmed. Buildings will be knocked flat, water will boil away, enemies will be scattered to the four winds. In layman terms, this spell does two bonk, with some overdone special effects thrown in. What the spell does when it backfires is best left to the imagination.

Spells are cast in either one of three ways. Thrown spells, such as lightning bolts, fireballs, spitballs, web spells, and other stuff which is intended to actually "hit" the target should be made using a Bod roll vs the Bod of the target. You can throw in any knacks which are appropriate as well, such as "Fire Spitball With Deadly Accuracy". Spells which give the character a personal effect such as a fly spell, or a superchange spell should require a 'Smarts' roll at a difficulty set by the Game Master, usually between three to five. Spells which will have a direct effect on an unwilling target, such as a sleep or feeblemind spell should be made using a "Smarts roll vs the Smarts of the target". The loser of the roll will take the full effect of the spell. (Stupid wizards don't last long!)

What would a spell be without side causes or side effects? A Game Master should decide on some fun requirements or side effects for his player's spells, much in the same way that gadgets have side effects in *T.F.O.S.* Here are some of our favorite tricks to spring on players.

Tricky Incantations: If the spell has verbal components, why not make them tongue twisters? The more powerful the spell, the more mind destroying the incantation. Have the player say the tongue twister three times fast whenever using the spell. If he screws it up, the spell backfires!

Wierd Props: Perhaps you need a hundred watt bulb everytime you want to cast your light spell. Maybe the required component for a fly spell is a large pair of cardboard wings, attached to the spell user's back with duct tape. What if you had to perform the first eight acts of the Nutcracker every time you wanted to call down the divine assistance? There's nothing funnier than a wizard trying to play saxaphone (much less find one) in order to cast one spell that will stop the band of orcs which are about to hack him into bitty pieces!

Side Effects: Just what does happen if the spell user wimps out on his Smarts roll (or, for that matter, rolls too well?) The choice is up to you! There are any number of fun and colorful side effects which can occur when a spell goes haywire. There is nothing like the look on an evil cleric's face when instead of disintegrating a party of Good Guys, he ends up being buried up to his neck in back issues of the *National Enquirer*!

Magic Items work along the same lines as spells. They cost from one to three points, depending on how many effects they have (from one to three, of course) Magic Items have the advantage of being cheaper to buy than spells, but the drawback

is that they tend to have nastier side effects, which go off more often, or are always on. They can also be taken away from the characters, causing great potential for stress and dismay.

There are many things which you can do to items to make them fun and unusual. If there are multiple powers, make sure that one of them is absolutely trivial, like improving the character's ability to recite poetry in Chinese. Making items intelligent is also a great way to harrass characters. A magic sword might go on strike and refuse to hit anyone for reasons of differing moral philosophies or for higher wages. What about a pair of "Boots of Sneaking and Sulking" with a tendency to tell bad jokes to one another at the top of their lungs just as the character is about to pick the pocket of the evil necromancer? An "Amulet of Love" may have some unique ideas as to what form of life would make the "perfect match" for the lovelorn character.

Items can be powerful. Above all, they should be humorous. There is little to compare with going on a long quest for an ancient artifact, only to discover that its primary power is acting as a combination bicycle pump/egg beater. Here are a couple of samples from our factory showroom.

The Wand of Roddenberry: This slim wand, crafted of an unknown metal, can be set for three settings: heat, stun, and disintegrate. The effects of all three settings is basically the same (2 bonk), but the "special effects" vary with each setting. The wand has a tendancy to overload. The Game Master should roll a 1D6 every game to determine how many times the wand can be used before overloading. Overloading will release a powerful burst of energy which will leave the character and anyone close to him in a ten foot deep crater, completely bonked out! The wand will remain intact at the bottom of the crater, and another D6 should be rolled to determine the time before the next mishap.

Ron McMarvelous Mansion: This small, metal cube is featureless except for a smiling clown face on one of the six sides. When this side is pressed and the cube is tossed, it unfolds into a full-sized fast food restaurant staffed by pimply-faced, teenaged elves ready to serve the characters. This device has no ill effects, unless the characters forget to pay their tab, in which case they get to face an army of clowns wielding baseball bats, shouting "You deserve a break today!" They procede to deal out as many "breaks" as possible!

MONSTERS

These can be any bizarre and offbeat creatures you create or convert over from your favorite FRP system. As a rule, converted monsters should have points to spend on knacks, powers, and spells equal in number to their hit dice. Of course, you can modify this as you see fit. Their stats, should you even wish to bother with them, are a matter of individual discretion. Have fun!

COMBAT

Okay, all you "Blood & Guts" fans out there, we know this is the section you have been impatiently waiting...

Sorry to dissapoint you but nobody dies in *Stupid Fantasy*. Not even the bad guys. Characters in *Stupid Fantasy* lose bonk. When all their bonk is gone, they are "bonked out". How they lose this bonk is a matter of special effects. Watching a few hours of old Warner Bros. cartoons should give you plenty of examples of how to inflict comic damage.

Fireballs and lightening bolts will generally leave the target area blackened and charred and with a vacant expression on his face. Falling and crushing damage will leave the character with a whole lot of lumps, or turn them into an accordian if the effects of the bonk are really grandiose. Blunt weapons will do straight bonk to the target, usually from one to three bonk depending on the size of the weapon (a thrown rock being at the lower end of the scale, a mace in the middle, and boulder from a catapult towards the top).

Damage from bladed, or nasty projectile weapons is somewhat trickier. Swords, arrows and machinegun bullets will never actually hit a living target. These weapons will dent the target's armor, shred its clothes, and

generally scare them out of their wits. Every time a character successfully hits with one of these damage producing devices, have the target make a Cool roll (at a difficulty depending on the type and success of the attack) Everytime the target fails, he/she/it takes bonk from fear and awe. Every successful attack after the first, reduces the targets chance of making their cool roll by 1. When a target loses all of its bonk in such a manner, it will either flee in panic, surrender on the spot, dash off shaking his fists, and swearing revenge, pass out from fright, or hang his head dejectedly and catch a bus home to watch soap operas and drink diet cola for the rest of his life.

Example: *Wanabe Flynn*, ace good guy swordsman, has squared off against his arch enemy, *Badicus Breath*, an evil warrior of ill repute. Wanabe and Badicus attack each other simultaneously, each using their Bod stat and their Knacks with Swords against each other. Badicus wins the first round, barely hitting Wanabe. His sword cuts the sleeves off of Wanabe's chainmail, giving him quite a start. As the fight progresses over a number of turns, Badicus gains the upper hand, and poor Wanabe is almost down to his birthday suit. Then in a last-ditch effort, Wanabe maxes on his roll as Badicus wimps out. Wanabe succeeds in writing the Magna Carta on Badicus' breastplate with the tip of his sword. This is too much for Badicus, who drops his weapon, catches the next merchant ship to the southern isles, and lives out the rest of his life in an obscure monastary. The forces of Good have triumphed again! Wanabe holds his sword high in victory, only to find that he is about to be attacked by a legion of flying, undead violinists. The battle begins in earnest!

BACK TO THE SCENARIO

Now that your characters are ready and the referee has an in-depth knowledge of the system, it's time to review the scenario. Miasma, the Dragon, has Charmeuse, the princess. The characters are going to get her back and return her to her father, the King. In exchange for a lucrative reward and her hand in marriage, and the prospect of living happily ever after...

THE BIG PICTURE

What the players don't realize is that the king and the dragon are rival businessmen. Miasma is currently the chief stockholder in the chain of theme dungeons, and he kidnapped the princess to prevent a takeover bid by the king. The players will learn this after trekking halfway across the continent, facing uncountable dangers, so that they can fight their way to Miasma's headquarters, located in one of the theme dungeons. They'll also discover that Chameuse and Miasma have fallen in love. They plan to have an olde-fashioned Norse wedding and settle down. In the end, the king and the Miasma will conduct a merger, leaving the confused heroes holding the empty bag.

No matter how you run *Stupid Fantasy*. No matter how many additions or revisions you make to these rules, the most important point is...**KEEP IT FUNNY!** The last thing we ever want to be accused of is having made a serious attempt at a game conversion! These rules are simple and stupid, with an emphasis on throwing realism out the window. There need be no set plot or storyline. You can introduce elements from any genre at any time. Feel free to steal shamelessly from your favorite books and movies. There is no wn win or lose in *Stupid Fantasy*. Just keep it quick and humorous, and when you can't take it anymore, go back to a saner campaign, or try any one of these popular variations:

STUPID FANTASY MEETS VALLEYVILLE HIGH: Transport your *Stupid Fantasy* characters into your *Teenagers From Outer Space* campaign! Have fun shopping in the mall! Go out on dates! Avoid detention!

CONVERT YOUR CHARACTERS

PRINCESS CHARMEUSE

Smarts: 2
Bod: 3
RWP: 5
Luck: 2
Riding: 3
Looks: 6
Cool: 3
Bonk: 3

Knacks:
- Act Helpless + 3
- Bat Eylashes Invitingly +2
- Get in the Way +4

Traits:
- Charming
- Mindless
- Screams a lot

MIASMA THE DRAGON

Bod: 6
Luck: 3
Flying: 6
Looks: ?
Cool: 6
Bonk: 10

Powers:
- Fly
- Breath Fire
- Shape Change

Knacks:
- Locate Virgins +3
- Burn Village to the Ground +2
- Play the Market +5

Traits:
- Enigmatic
- Hot Temper
- Considers Most Adventurers to be Great Snack Treats

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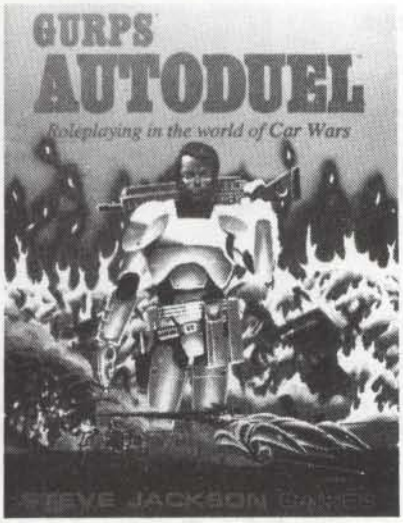
GURPS: AUTODUEL



Reviewed by: J. Michael Caparula
Published by: Steve Jackson Games
Designers: Aaron Allston & Scott Haring
Price: $10
Complexity level: Moderate
Rules clarity: Good
Graphics quality: Good

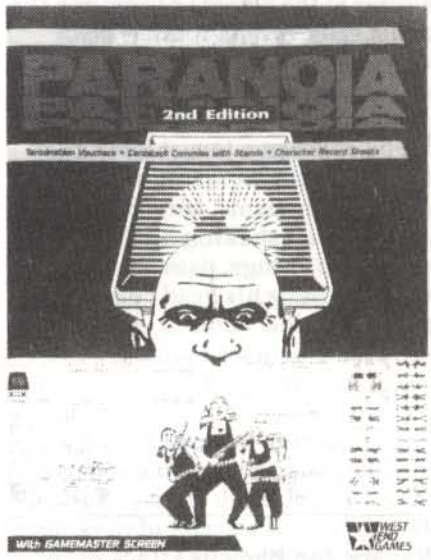
GURPS: AUTODUEL is an honest-to-goodness set of role-playing rules for the anarchic world of **Car Wars**, using the Generic Universal Role-Playing System.

The product is presented in a full-size, 84 page book, with pull-out maps, charts, and adventures, plus cut-out, cardboard heroes, and counters for **Car Wars**. The game, with the **GURPS** Basic Set, is really a complete game which represents a smooth fusion of two very different systems. The **Car Wars** basics are generally left intact (exceptions follow), and the **GURPS** role-playing rules adapt nicely to the genre. The background material is terriffic, encompassing material from all of the supplements and expansion sets. A mini-atlas of North America gives a state-by-state description of 21st Century America, providing many scenario ideas. Also featured are detailed write-ups of famous organizations like the AADAUBN, Brotherhood of Truckers, etc.

The character creation rules fine-tune the **GURPS** player-character to the world of **CAR WARS** and its occupations. Two new skills are introduced: Electronics and Area Knowledge, and many skills are modified for vehicular specialization. Much of the book is devoted to autoduelling. Vehicle construction works exactly like **Car Wars**, except that "spaces" are spelled out as Cubic Foot Capactiy. This is much more accurate, and it may be applied to the original game. Handling Class is abstracted as bonuses to the drivers' driving skill. Control rolls are made as skill checks, with modifiers based on Maneuvers or Hazards. Movement itself is less integrated and more sequential making for shorter duels. The combat system outdoes **Car Wars** by a mile. Attack rolls are, of course, skill based (**not** weapon based), thus, it is the characters making the attack, not just the hardware. The only Defense Roll (from GURPS) a vehicle gets is the passive defense of its armor. Damage is determined on a Damage Allocation Chart, with modifiers based on the part of the vehicle hit. And, of course, there's a Critical Hit Table to give some duels a really quick ending. This is a great revamping of the rather unrealistic **Car Wars** system, long overdue.

I would recommend **GURPS: AUTODUEL** with some qualifications. **GURPS** players with a budding interest in **Car Wars** will do well to pick it up. *Everything* necessary for **Car Wars** is here, including an improved combat system. I was a bit miffed at the exclusion of helicopters and gas-powered vehicles, however. Veteran autoduellists will find much of this material old hat, but the combat system is worth the price. What's more, running characters instead of vehicles is great fun. The skill-based systems really put the player in the driver's seat.

Paranoia Excessory Pack



Published by: West End Games
Designed by: Steve Gilbert
Price: $9.95
Reviewed by: Richard A. Edwards

What's that, citizen, you haven't got your copy of the Excessory Pack for Paranoia (second edition) yet? You say you vaporized a commie mutant, traitor without filling out the Accusation of Treason/Termination Voucher Request Form, 397-3-0985-85-K/6 in triplicate. Oh well... don't worry, we'll supply your replacement with one. What was your name, citizen?

This newest supplement for **Paranoia** includes three copies of three different forms in triplicate. They are the R&D Experimental Equipment report Form, the Equipment/Weapon/Vehicle request Form, and the Treason form mentioned above. They are all nifty, official looking forms, ready to fill out in triplicate with carbon paper inserts. Also included are a dozen of the new character sheets with a space on the back for "secret stuff".

Also included are more than 75 Cardstock Commies complete with plastic stands. Last, but not least, a

new GM screen to hide behind.

All this may sound like a lot for your money, but it isn't. The forms are really neat and maybe you'll use one or two of them, but you will hate to use the last one. The character sheets are okay, but only a dozen come with the pack. The Cardstock Commies are nice, but only half are in color on cardstock, the rest are in black and white on thinner paper. And while the new second edition GM screen is useful it still doesn't seem to justify the price.

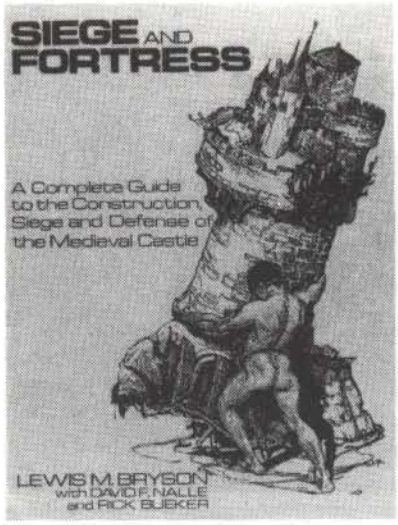
I think West End has given us a selection of gimmicks for which no GM will hold off on obtaining, but I wish they would have included an adventure, a mini-adventure even, to make me feel like I was getting more for my money than some extra copies of forms.

My Game For A Castle!

SIEGE AND FORTRESS: A Complete Guide to the Construction, Siege & Defense of the Medieval Castle

Published by: Ragnarok Games
Designed by: Lewis M. Bryson, David F. Nalle, and Rick Bueker
Price: $4.95
Complexity level: Low
Graphics quality: Good
Reviewed by: Jeff Albanese

Siege and Fortress is a 32 page work that was born out of a series of lectures given at *ORIGINS '82*. The authors, after more presentations, were impressed with the responses they received, and felt that the material would make a great playing aid. Well, they were right. **Siege and Fortress** is designed to be used for any fantasy, role-playing system, and one doesn't have to be a student of history to understand the material. The price is low enough, considering the cost of many modules on the market today.

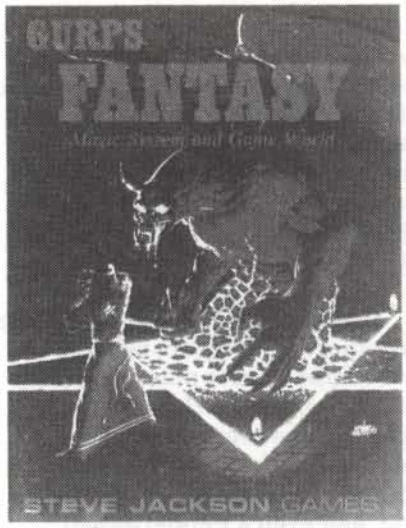

SIEGE AND FORTRESS
A Complete Guide to the Construction, Siege and Defense of the Medieval Castle
LEWIS M. BRYSON
with DAVID F. NALLE
and RICK BUEKER

The guide is broken into two parts: The text, which covers castles in general, sieges, siege engines, and a summary of the sieges of the First Crusade. The second part of the guide gives you maps, plans of castles, and illustrations of both castles and siege instruments. Also, for those of you who are interested in the subject, the authors list a bibliography of the books used for the research on the matter. This touch is most welcomed by yours truly, who teaches history and always wants to see where his students got their material.

The guide is extremely well done, and each section picks up where the other section left off. And the over 180 illustrations give you lots of ideas on how to design your own castle for either your fantasy or Medieval campaigns.

Siege and Fortresses, with its low price, abundant illustrations, and well researched material, should be in every fantasy/Medieval gamer's library. If you can't find it in your local store, write to Ragnarok Enterprises: 1402 21st St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20036 for information on their product line. Make sure you tell them you read this review!

GURPS; FANTASY



Reviewed by: J. Michael Caparula
Published by: Steve Jackson Games, Inc.
Designer: Steve Jackson
Price: $10
Complexity level: Low
Rules clarity: Good
Graphics Quality: Good

GURPS: Fantasy is a set of magic rules and world background for the GURPS system. It is presented in a 92 page book with a color map of *Ytarria* and a sample wizard character. The systems are simple and easy to use, and the writing is clear and witty making it a pleasure to read.

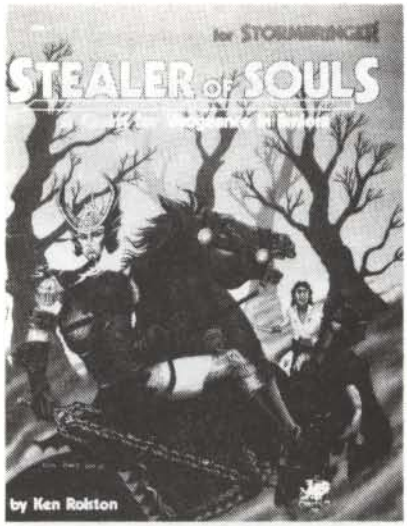
The magic system contains no surprises. Spells are learned as skills, and are easier to learn if your character has the Magical Aptitude advantage. Casting a spell is simply making a skill roll against your spell level. Modifiers and results depend on the spell class: Area , Missile, Information, etc. Rules are provided for ceremonial magic, enchanting items, and inventing new spells. There are a few optional rules for more "hard core" GMs, plus a short chapter on Alchemy. The bulk of the book is taken up by a very comprehensive list of over 300 spells.

This system is based on the abstract concept of "mana", and is geared toward a high mana world. The aim is towards the throw away style of magic that appeals to most gamers. I prefer more realistic systems. Ones based on invocation and ritual. Fortunately, the system is flexible enough to allow personalization. Additionally, the sheer number of spells and possible variations on them are enough for GMs to create their own laws of magic.

The world of *Ytarria*, where one can expect more future GURPS adventures to take place, is a truly generic fantasy world. Cultures include a Sherwood Forest, a Corrupt Empire, two "Arabian Nights" desert kingdoms, a Viking land, and even a Feudal Japan. Obviously, no matter what fantasy genre you prefer, you can set your campaign here. Mr. Jackson rationalizes this concept through the world's history. In an attempt to rid *Ytarria* of Orcs, the dark Elves cast a huge summoning spell which subsequently backfired, bringing denizens of our own Crusade-era Earth to their world. This makes *Ytarria* somewhat interesting on a religious level, given that Christianty and Islam still thrive. A chapter on creatures and characters allows players to adventure as a non-human, and features two new fantasy-oriented skills: Heraldry and Falconry.

There are mixed reactions to **GURPS: Fantasy**. There's little innovation here. Most of the material has been encountered in one form or another elsewhere. The best aspect of the all too simple magic system is its voluminous number of spells, but *Ytarria* is something of a bore due to its lack of an alien feel. Mr. Jackson's efforts to be generic and user-friendly prevent him from being unique and creative. **GURPS: Fantasy** can be seen as 180 degrees apart from something detailed and imposing like **Harn**. I think I'll look for something in the middle of that spectrum: easy to use, but still interesting and inventive.

A Quest for Vengeance in Ilmiora



Reviewed by: Michael R. Jarrell
Published by: Chaosium, Inc.
Designed by: Ken Rolston
Complexity level: Moderate
Rules clarity: Good
Graphics quality: Fair

Stealer of Souls is part one of a two-part adventure packet published by Chaosium for **Stormbringer**.

Do you know what it's like to open a box of Cracker Jack and NOT find a prize? Well, if you don't, and you purchase **Stealer of Souls** , you may find out. As someone who has waited for this particular scenario for quite some time I was severely disappointed by what I received. I was expecting swords and glory. Magic and mystery. Instead I got a script. Everything was laid out nice and neat for the GM. It told him exactly what to do and when to do it. And no matter what, it must happen or the scenario falls apart. A script. The players and their characters' mission is a simple one. Help the young lady, Freyda, avenge her father's death by killing the four merchants who engineered it, and then find and kill Elric. Easy enough. Now, for those of you who have read Moorcocks' "Bane of the Black Sword", you'll be familiar with the exquisitely gory details of the death of Freydas' sire, so I won't bore you. If you haven't read the book I strongly suggest that you do so before you attempt to run this adventure and its companion, **Black Sword**.

Getting down to the bare bones of like and dislike where this scenario is concerned, is rough. Overall the work is good, but it just doesn't have what it takes to reach out and grab a player by the throat. It lacks the... mood that should be present in a **Stormbringer** adventure. That everpresent feeling of being caught up in things that are way beyond your power to stop. This, I think, is due to the scripting style in which it was written. Sad. The artwork is mediocre at best, and just plain amateurish at worst. The artist's style just doesn't fit.

The highlight, and redeeming feature, of the whole packet is the wealth of information on Bakshaan and Ilmiora. Most of this information is contained in the four pages of players' handouts. The info included here covers everything from customs and manners to politics and the practice of sorcery within city limits. The information contained herein makes up for a lot of the rest. If you run a campaign that spans the Young Kingdoms you could really use this. If you do not, then I suggest you don't even look at this scenario.

So what does this all boil down to? The game just doesn't cut the mustard. If you are a SBophile you'll want it. If you are looking for quality versus cash outlay you may be seriously disappointed, as I was. The wait for **Stealer of Souls** was a long one and hardly worth it. Buyers beware! And may Arioch bless thee... with his absence!

continued on page 47

TACTICAL ASSAULT GROUP

by
David Webber

David Webber is the editor of PAPER MAYHEM magazine which covers play-by-mail games.

Tactical Assault Group is Quest Games, Inc's second play-by-mail game to go to market. **Tactical Assault Group (TAG)** is a strategy game in which 20-60 players are in a 7 story building with their primary goal of being the sole survivor in the game. You are a member of an elite core of people who regularly protect important heads of state, are used for espionage, or other covert jobs. This is setup as a sort of Olympic Games contest in the future, where as a member of this elite group, you are vying for who is the best at their profession. You have to find and assassinate your target while avoiding your assassin. You do not actually kill your opponent. It is a simulation overseen by the computer.

During the game you will be exploring the building and finding items, money, and information to increase your character's attributes. You can also use the computer to ask questions about the other characters in the game.

ATTRIBUTES

The character that you will play in the game has several attributes. These attributes will help you depending on how high that they are. Everyone begins the game with all of their attributes at 3. You can increase these attributes by spending credits or using experience points. There is a table included with the rules that shows you how much it costs to increase an attribute at each level. The costs for increasing each particular attribute varies.

The attributes are: Endurance, Cunning, Accuracy, Defense, and Skill. There is also hit points or damage left, which you can increase. This can't be increased by using credits or experience. It is increased by raising your endurance levels.

Hit points are the number of points that you can sustain before being killed. Your character begins the game with 80 hit points.

Endurance is how well you will hold up in combat. By increasing your endurance, you will increase your hit points.

Cunning is an ability that will help you in disarming traps, setting traps, cracking safes, adds to your defense, and adds to the amount of damage that you can inflict on your opponent.

Accuracy aids in combat. The higher the factor, the more damage your weapon can inflict.

Defence is the ability to defend yourself.

Skill is similar to cunning but it also is a factor when you manufacture items.

In the early stages of the game, I worked on increasing endurance, skill, and cunning. As the game progressed and these three attributes were high enough for me, I started increasing accuracy and defense.

You may have a different strategy, but I experienced more danger in the beginning from the traps than from my assassin.

MOVEMENT

The game is set up in a 7 story building. The top level is 1 and the bottom level is 7. There are 25 rooms on each floor arranged in a 5 x 5 matrix. Movement between floors is done via the stairs, which are located in the four corners and the center of each floor. Movement is accomplished by using a numbers' system. Each doorway has its own number. To move to the adjoining room, you would have to use the appropriate number.

You begin the game in a room and will be able to move to other rooms by using the doorway numbers that are listed in the room. Movement phase consists of 10 moves. After a few turns you will be able to explore several rooms.

The key to exploring the rooms is finding objects in the storage devices and making a map of the doorway numbers. The map will be your main defense as the game progresses. Since you can ONLY fire at your target, you will have to have several escape routes in the event that your assassin catches up with you. I am telling you this from experience. I spent time fleeing from my assassin, but my downfall was being cornered in an area that I hadn't explored, so I had limited movement.

STORAGE DEVICES

A storage device is anything that is used to store items, such as desks, tables, safes, and file cabinets. There are several storage devices in each room. Some are easy to open, others are locked by a key or a combination lock. There are four different options that you can choose from to attempt to open a storage device.

OPTION 1: OPEN

Simply, you open the object. If it is locked, you won't be able to open it. If you possess a key, the computer will automatically use it to attempt to open the object. You will want to manufacture all 10 keys to be able to open all storage devices except combination locks.

OPTION 2: COMBINATION

You will use a combination on the safe. As you go through storage devices, you will come across combinations for safes throughout the building. You can use these or you can just try to guess the combination.

OPTION 3: SAFE CRACKING

You try to open the safe. Your success is based on your ability and cunning levels. I had tried it once, but was unsuccessful, but my skill and cunning were not that high at that time.

OPTION 4: FIRE WEAPON

You can use your weapon to open a storage device. The tougher the storage device, the more energy that you will have to use to open it. I was doing this early in the game, but found how foolish I was using this option. Firing your weapon at the storage device, uses up your offensive energy. You will need this energy to take out your target.

Your best option is having the keys. Vital to this operation is the manufacture of all ten keys.

MANUFACTURING

You are able to manufacture items in the game other than the ones that you begin with. these items can be various phasers, explosives, surveillance devices, robots, keys, etc.

There are three requirements to build an item:

1. You must have the proper amount of building components
2. You must be in a room with a Manufacturing Table
3. You must spend enough rounds in the room to complete the item

Don't worry about building a Phaser 5 right at the start. Even though a powerful weapon may look good, you will want to build other items first. I would recommend building keys, robots, and opponent detector first.

ROBOTS AND SURVEILLANCE

The use of robots is a very important defensive factor. Using robots will confuse your assassin. If your assassin is looking for you, there is a good chance that he will locate your robot instead. The robot could lead him on a random chase, giving you more time to elude him.

The use of the robots saved me several times. I was attacked by my assassin but escaped. He located my robot the next turn, thus he pursued the robot instead of me. This gave me some time to build my character back up.

You attach surveillance devices on others in the game, so that you can locate them. If you do this on your target and use the pursue option, you will go after him.

I didn't have the chance to use the surveillance devices, but relied heavily on my robot decoys.

Another type of surveillance would be the asking of questions to the computer. I kept tabs on my target, assassin and others via the computer. The only drawback is that the locations could be a robot decoy.

DEFENSE

Besides having hit points, you will be able to add shields to help protect yourself. These shields may be added to your body, energy transfer packs, BRAM, and ROM. These are the locations that your assassin can attack. I placed the majority of my shield on the body. For your assassin to kill you, he is going to have to fire on the body. So, if you have shields on your body, your assassin will have to knock out the shields before doing any harm to the body itself.

Don't neglect protesting the

other things though. In later stages of the game, when you have accumulated large numbers of shields, full protection should be a must.

Another form of defense is the SCRAMBLE option. By using scramble, false signals will be given to your assassin that will jog his aim.

You also have a PROTECTION option. This is an option that tells the computer that you are paying more attention to defense. This option enables you to subtract 6 points of damage from the total amount inflicted upon the area.

The final defensive measure is the robots, which I had mentioned earlier. To me, the robots are the most important part of the defense.

OFFENSE

I enjoyed playing TAG. It is stimulating when you are tracking down your target and finally go in for the kill. I had one kill and spent several turns tracking down my next elusive target, but kept blowing away his robot decoys instead.

There was even enjoyment when I was being pursued! I was trying to keep one step ahead of my assassin at the same time trying to hunt my target. At one point, both were in the same room!

The biggest drawback to the game is the price, $4.50 per turn. Though the price is not outrageous, it seems to me that the first few turns should be a bit lower, since you really can't do that much until you have explored several rooms.

Quest Games, Inc. processes the game turns for **TAG** on 10 and 14 day intervals, depending on the game that you choose to join. I played on a 7 day turn around which was very hectic. You have to get the turn out the day after you receive it, so that you don't miss the process date. They don't offer the 7 day any more.

To get into the game you can mail $10.00 for the set-up fee, which includes the rules and first turn, to QUEST GAMES, INC., P.O. 610, Oakland, NJ 07436. If you want to view the rules, you can obtain them for $5.00 from QUEST GAMES, INC., or you can also get them for $4.50 from inside the back issue #24 of Paper Mayhem at 1518 Adams St., Ottawa, IL 61350.

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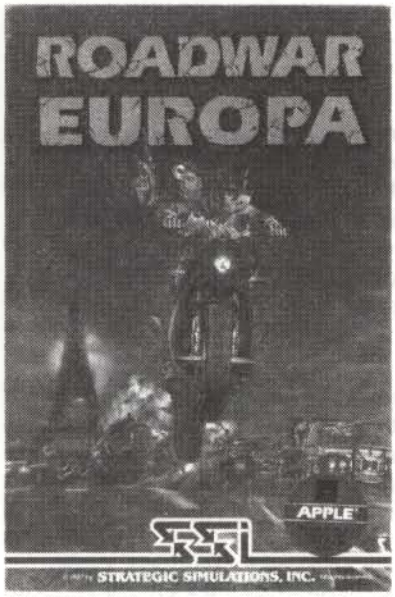

ROADWAR 2000
ROADWAR EUROPA

Published by: Strategic Simulations, Inc.
Designed by: Jeffrey Johnson
Developed by: (Roadwar 2000) Robert W. Calfee & Jeffrey A. Johnson (Roadwar Europa) George MacDonald
Complexity level: Moderate
Rules clarity: Good
Graphics quality: Good
For: Apple II, Commodore 64, Amiga, Atari St
Price: $39.95
Reviewed by: Robbie Robberson

This is going to be a bonus review for you readers. That's right, two reviews for the price of one. Because these two games from Strategic Simulations, Inc. deal with the same subject, that of a world gone crazy from the results of a decimating epidemic, depending on a gang of auto-duellists to right the wrongs that exist.

As leader of your small gang of 'road warriors' the responsibility falls on your shoulders of driving across the continents in search of lost scientists (**RW 2000**) or ticking atom bombs planted by terrorists (**RW Europa**). Along the way, however, are scores of rival gangs, vigilantes, renagade soldiers, mutants, and even cannibals. All of these groups will try to end your life in deadly combat. It's a case of dog-eat-dog, and no quarter asked or given.

At the start of the game, you have a small complement of cars and troops. There are a good variety of vehicles from which to choose. Each vehicle is rated for speed, maneuverability, braking, defensive screening, and supply capacity. Your troops are ranked in ability as well. Armsmasters being crack professionals, and recruits being green cowards.

Depending on which game you are playing, you will find yourself in a major North American or European city. Unfortunately, the going gets rougher from here on in, and if you are expecting to keep your original gang together, you can forget it. The attrition in these games is high, and may require you to start over several times until you get a good solid gang that has staying power. As you travel from city to city, you have the options to loot, recruit new soldiers, scout cities, and commandeer abandoned vehicles. These actions are important since they are the only way to increase your gang's size and strength.

Of course there will be trouble as you try to muscle in on somebody's territory. At this point combat is invoked. You are given the option of allocating the troops among cars or having the computer doing it for you. You are then presented with a tactical display of the battlefield and the duelling cars. Each turn of combat has several movement phases, depending on the speed of the cars, and a fire phase. This system is similar to **Wizard Crown**'s combat system (designed by the same author). After the fire phase, comes the boarding phase as you send your men into the next-door car in a hopeful attempt of capturing it. Combat ends when the last enemy car is destroyed or captured. At this point supplies and promotions are distributed to the survivors.

It is too bad that the **Roadwar** series requires you to spend so much time on combat in order to play. The tactical combat option can take up to an hour to resolve, and you can run into several encounters in a single session of play. This is tedious and boring since you have no choice except to fight, and tactical combat is the only way in which you are allowed to add more cars to your gang. There are quicker options for resolving combat, but these are unsatisfactory since the computer moves for both sides, resulting in unacceptable losses for even the most battle-hardened veteran. In short, you are forced to play the game over an unjustified extended session, since you will be covering little territory during each time you play.

The strategic part of the game is underdeveloped, and sorely lacking for detail. Basically, you are reduced to running over the countryside, battling and controlling cities until you are fortunate enough to stumble onto a clue or vital information. It would have been far better if the designer/developer had fleshed out this facet of the game, allowing the

player more participation in the clue gathering department rather than having clues handed to him on an apparently arbitrary basis.

The rule book is well organized, although it would have been nice to see a few concrete examples of play illustrated in the manual to clear up some vague instances such as why a vehicle 'may be' captured by your surviving boarders instead of being captured automatically. There are also no explanations as to what happens to your boarders on an enemy vehicle that crashes, although it is safe to assume that they are lost.

Graphics are clear and symbols are easy to decipher. No problem of knowing where you are since the program keeps you apprised of what city you have entered. The tactical combat graphics are clear as well, allowing for icons as well as facing symbols to show which direction your vehicles are heading.

In short, the **Roadwar** series is an example of a good idea that is short circuited by its components. If Strategic Simulations, Inc. can re-release these games with a better and quicker combat routine, or better yet, reduce the incidence of combat, the games would be a required addition to every serious computer gamer's library. As of now, they are simply entertaining in the short run, and tedious in the long.

OGRE

Designer: Steve Muese
Reviewed by: Tim Robinson
Published by: Origin Systems, Inc.
For: Apple II
Price: $36.95
Complexity level: Varies from average to difficult
Rules quality: Excellent

For those wargaming/computer fans, **OGRE** is a must. This game is based upon the science fiction minigame classic, **OGRE**, published by Steve Jackson games, Inc. As a veteran player of the original boardgame version and its sequels, **GEV** and **Shortwave**, and a playtester for the Reinforcement Pack, this game is *exactly* like the original boardgame. In fact, when playing against the computer one finds that the computer plays better than most human players. I *Never* know what to expect from the Ogre. Further, with pull down windows and excellent graphics this game is even more enhanced.

The Ogre world is set in the year 2085, when armor technology has advanced to where only rapid fire, shaped charged weapons, and tactical mini-nukes can destroy the armor of the day. Thus, most of the units involved are armored fighting vehicles such as missile tanks, heavy tanks, and ground effect vehicles. Infantry fight in armored, powered suits and are armed like the AFVs with shaped charged and mini-nuke weapons. However, despite the awesome combat abilities of these units, the battlefield is dominated by the Ogre, a tank-like vehicle thirty meters long and twenty meters wide! It is armed with an array of nuke firing weapons, missiles, anti-personal weapons, and is moved by a large number of massive treads. Worse, there are no human operators on the Ogre, as it is controlled by an artifically intelligent computer. If this sounds like a challenge, you had better believe it.

The scenarios in the game are based around the smaller Mark III Ogre and the larger Mark V unit. As the defender, you get to choose a number of armor units and mobile infantry to try to keep the Ogre from its goal: to destroy your command post. Victory is fairly simple: destroy the Ogre before it destroys your command post and you win. Any other result is at least a marginal Ogre victory.

Ogre will usually choose one or two tactics to destroy your command post. One strategy is to try to destroy your pieces piecemeal, and then mop up your command post at its leisure. The other main tactic is to outrun much of the defender's forces and only engage those units it must. Thus, it can often get to the command post quickly and without a great deal of harm to itself. Then it will use its remaining weapons to destroy your command post.

The defender's tactics are just as varied as the original board game. You can choose a mixed, balanced force that combines firepower and mobility. You can choose to take an all GEV force, and use their high speed for hit and run tactics to defeat the Ogre. Another tactic is to choose an all-heavy tank force and try to physically destroy the Ogre. Whatever your force consists of, it is usually best to destroy 50% of the Ogre's weapons and then attack treads and weapons. This way you reduce the Ogre's firepower and can reduce its speed. This is only one of many possible strategies, which is what makes this game so enjoyable.

The game comes with a disk, two booklets, and one player reference card. The red booklet, titled "Ogre" is an introduction to playing the game and describes the units. The grey booklet, called *Strategy and Notes*, is a "how to" defeat the Ogre. This booklet needs to be carefully digested if the game is to be successfully played. In addition, both booklets are enjoyable and entertaining. They really give the reader a feel for the situation and the game.

OGRE is enhanced by the use of pull-down windows which can be easily activated by a pointer and a scroll menu. Further, the placement of units, called dragging and clicking, is easy with a joystick or mouse. Additionally, games may be saved for future play, and terrain can be customized and saved for future use. This enables you to design your own scenarios.

This is a great game, well worth buying and playing extensively. The computer Ogre is great competition and there are options to play against a human opponent. I can highly recommend this game.

Balance of Power: Geopolitics in the Nuclear Age

Published by: Mindscape
Designer: Chris Crawford
Price: $49.95
For: IBM PC, Apple II, MacIntosh
Reviewer: Bob Ewald

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to conduct the foreign policy of the United States? Well, Chris Crawford's latest game will give you a taste of power.

In his new game, you conduct the foreign policy of either the United States or the Soviet Union. This policy can include economic aid to El Salvador, military aid to Afghanistan or Sudan, destabilization of a country, or, of course, troops to Germany or Nicaragua. Can you, as foreign policy leader of your country, lead the free world (or communist world) through eight volatile years of superpower politics or will you lead the world into the darkness of nuclear war?

A word of warning here at the start. This is not a quick "beer and pretzels" game. A single turn can take up to an hour to play depending on how detailed your thinking is. There is a mass of information to look through and how well you can analyze it will determine much of your success.

The idea of the game itself is rather simple: In a bipolar world use the facts at hand and what you can derive to bring more rich and powerful countries into your fold than you lose.

At your command are several billion dollars and a couple of hundred thousand troops. Through prudent spending in military and economic aid you try to support those countries in the world that are friendly to you, and subvert those that are unfriendly. Meantime the other side is trying to do exactly the same thing. All this while both sides are trying to avoid blowing the world to bits.

Other tactics available to you are the creation of treaties which can get you into a lot of trouble, diplomatic pressure (which if done improperly can cause a lot of grief at the end of the game), and destabilization (covertly trying to undercut support for the target

There Are Only *THREE* Types of Wargames...

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because it's on your "topic" at your "scale" and, at worst, you'll add it to your collection even if you only play it once.

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for the opposite reasons: they're on a subject or scale that you are *not* are interested in playing (not to mention buying).

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government).

There are two ways to lose. First of all you can lose the point count at the end of the game. The other is to start a nuclear war. In a crisis, a nuclear war may be started by one side challenging the actions of the other. The situation keeps escalating from Defcon 6 to Defcon 11 until one side backs down, or Defcon 1 is reached. At that point, the game ends and you must restart or turn off the computer.

A map of the world is displayed at all times on the screen. At times, windows are overlaid on the map. The map itself, in EGA mode, looks excellent. There are a few errors on it, like the Mediterranean Sea is not colored as are the rest of the oceans, but they are merely annoying.

One nice effect is that when you call up a country, that country is usually highlighted. I say 'usually' because once in a while it doesn't come up highlighted, or as in the case of India and Pakistan, the wrong country comes up.

Another problem with the map is that with certain options the computer redraws the map with very slow patterns. These patterns take up to two minutes to draw in EGA mode, despite the fact that I have an excellent EGA card on my AT. I would hate to try it on a slower machine. However, it doesn't take long to figure out which options to stay away from.

The rules to the game come in a nice, hardcover book and are as complete as I have seen. The 86 pages of rules contain a bibliography as well as two sections on strategy and one on how the game works. It describes nearly every aspect of the game, and is well written.

As I mentioned there is a wealth of information for each of the 62 countries shown in the game. Each of them has political and economic statistics that change during the game, and must be watched constantly.

Overall, I thought the game was an accurate portrayal of modern geopolitics. I still feel that multi-polar would have made it more interesting, as well as multi-player. However, I underestand the reasoning behind the design.

However, my biggest gripe will always be the copy protection. I don't mind the single installation on the hard disk, but I do mind being required to warmstart my computer every time I want to restart a game or go onto something else. It is my hope that this will be corrected in the future.

In conclusion, if this type of game appeals to you most of the problems are worth suffering through. However, if you're a hardcore wargamer who isn't interested in diplomacy, I suggest that you pass on this one.

G'day, Yanks, and watch out because

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Circle Reader Service # 6

Space / Fantasy Reader

By
J. Michael Caparula

Role-players are familiar with "worlds" or gaming environments. Whether it's Moorcock's Law-and-Chaos of **AD&D** or the computer crazed and gone haywire of **Paranoia**, each game exists within its own self-defined milieu. This issue I'd like to focus on a number of recent offerings featuring worlds that evolve from a singular basic concept.

Larry Niven, the established torch-holder of Heinlein hard SF, is well-known for emphasis on setting over character. In **The Integral Trees**, Niven explored the possibility of life evolving and existing in a zero-gravity environment. In the sequel, **The Smoke Ring** (Del Rey, 362 pp., $16.95), this unique setting is further investigated, and the motives of State Checker Sharls Davis Kendy are made less of a mystery. In the gaseous torus surrounding a decayed neutron star, heavier elements condense into a oxygen-nitrogen atmosphere, the "smoke ring". A type-G sister star supplies the life-giving elements within The Smoke Ring, providing a free-fall biological environment. The first book was set primarily on integral trees, kilometer-long arbors upon which much of humanity has settled. Kandy, a computer aboard a near-orbiting starship, is interested in uniting all of humanity within The Smoke Ring under one ruler... apparently himself.

The sequel concerns the efforts of the inhabitants of Citizen's Tree and a group of Loggers to reach a highly civilized center at the Clump. The Clump is a Lagrange point between Voy, the neutron star, and Gold, a planetoid within The Smoke Ring. As with any Niven yarn, technical detail supercedes all else, including, in this case at least, plot. We learn how the Loggers build steam rockets to propel integral trees, we learn how the Clump Admiralty built ring-shaped cities, etc. but there is little characterization (Kendy comes off as the most interesting character) and the storyline is linear, predictable. The setting is, naturally, spectacular, but a lot of the freshness has worn off. **Ringworld** merited a sequel, **The Integral Trees** did not.

The world of Michael Armstron's **After the Zap** (Popular Library, 246pp., $3.95) is inspired by a quote from a West German politician to the effect that the code for nuclear war should be in the heart of a child, so that our leaders would have to tear it out to use it. The setting is "post-Zap" Alaska, the Zap being the detonation of an experimental electromagnetic device. The result was a scrambling of neurons, causing a variety of mutations like perfect memory and the ability (or inability) to read. Holmes is one such reader who hooks up with a micronation of blimp-riding, free-enterprisers, dealers in tacnukes (with in-the-heart detonators) and other contraband. The cargo hold also includes a radioactive hallucinogen called Lazy that *negates* the effect of the Zap. Holmes' escapades lead him on a personal quest for his lost memory, a key factor in the tangled but tight-knit plot that snowballs to a James Bond conclusion atop Mt. McKinley. This is a fun, fast-paced book that I think SG/FG readers will like a lot.

Rudy Rucker (whose novels, especially **Master of Space and Time and the Secret of Life**, I would highly recommend) dabbles in the arcane practice of mathematical SF, a genre so rare Rucker was hard-put to fill up **Mathenauts: Tales of Mathematical Wonder** (Arbor House, 300pp., $9.95). In this anthology, writers like Asimov, Niven, Pohl, and Benford tackle such delights as Moebius strips, tesseracts, and Godel's Proof. What struck me were the stories where math transcends its scientific applications to become a philosophical model, like Norman Kagan's "Four Brands of the Impossible", where logic out-logics itself, or Douglas Hofstadter's immuttable law of probability in "The Tale of Happiton". This is a marvelous collection,and, given the rarity of math fiction, a somewhat priceless one. Gamemasters take note: this is a working guide on incorporating mathematical concepts into a campaign.

Readers of last issue know that I am a die-hard Philip K. Dick fanatic, so, as a follow-up to my review of **Radio Free Albemuth**, I must make mention of Paul Williams' Hugo-nominated **Only Apparently Real: The World of Philip K. Dick** (Arbor House, 184pp., $7.95). Williams conducted a series of interviews with Dick for *Rolling Stone* magazine in the mid-70's, centering primarily on a break-in and theft of Dick's house in California. Dick's not-so-outrageous theories on the identity of the culprits, from black militants to the FBI, form a focus for extrapolation and interpretation on much of his work and personal life. Dick (and Williams) also speculate on his VALIS experiences which became the subject of many of his later works. I have incorporated many of Dick's concepts into my role-playing campaigns; now at last I have a glimpse of the man himself. This is a penetrating portrait of one of the greatest and most influential SF writer of the past thirty years.

Unsolicited Plug: Dedicated Dickians would do well to look into The Philip K. Dick Society, Box 661, Glen Ellen, CA 95442. Membership is $6 per year, entitling you to a newsletter subscription and special offers of PKD-related material.

Fantasy Gamer

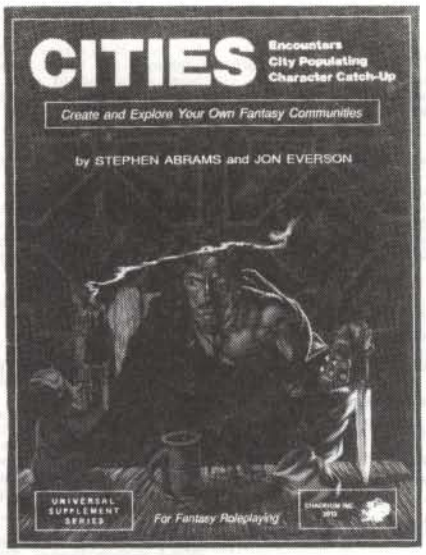
continued from page 38

Third Time's A Charm

Cities by Chaosium, is the third edition of a fantasy, role-playing supplement published by Midkemia Press in the early 1980's. For those of you out there who have never heard of them, they publish fantasy material, specializing in cities.

CITIES
Create and Explore Your Own Fantasy Communities

Reviewed by: Jeff Albanese
Published by: Chaosium, Inc.
Designed by: Stephen Abrams & Jon Everson of Midkemia Press
Complexity level: Moderate
Graphics quality: Excellent



However, the third edition is completely different from the first two. The tables have been expanded to give you more details about each encounter, and there are two new sections in this 64 page supplement: City Populating and Character Catch-Up.

City Population gives us "lazy types" examples and tables of how to create a city, town, or village. It's a great help for those of us who lack the time, or are lazy. This section gives you all you need to create cities, based on Medieval and Rennaissance data, which one may have to adjust to their own personal campaign.

Character Catch-Up gives both the DM/GM and the players things to do between adventures, or actions that would occur in a city. Gambling, jobs, and investments are covered in this section. This material can give you lots of ideas on how to keep everyone awake during those "dead times" that occur when most players are trying to recover from the last dungeon.

All in all, **Cities** is wonderfully done, and you should go out and get it. The saying, "The third time's a charm" certainly applies to this work!

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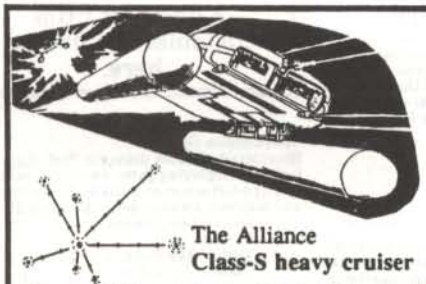
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1.__ Editorial
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3.__ Letters
4.__ Gen Con Report
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13.__ The Dragon and the Princess
14.__ Fantasy Gamer Reviews
15.__ Tactical Assualt Group
16.__ Computer Gamer Reviews
17.__ Space & Fantasy Reader
18.__ Gamer's Guide Classifieds
19.__ The re-entry of Gary Hart into the race.
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22.__ **ISSUE OVERALL**

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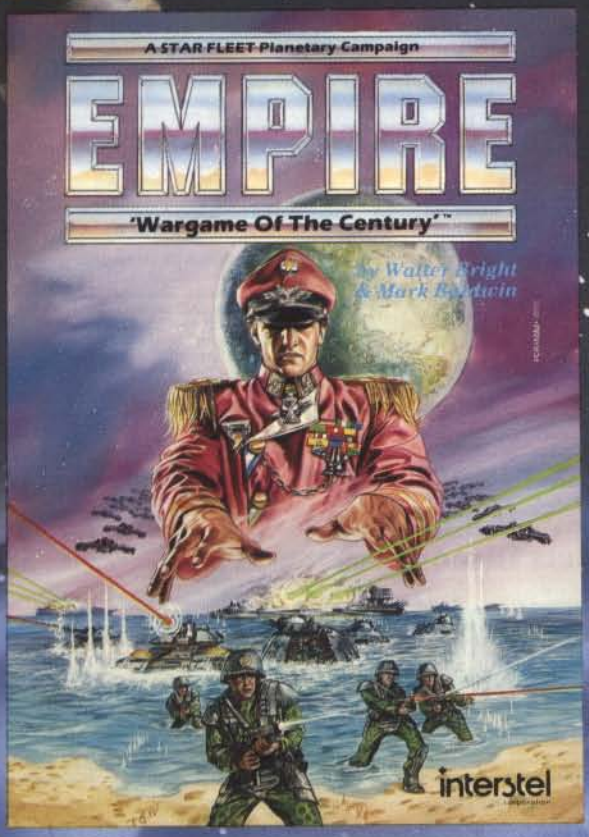
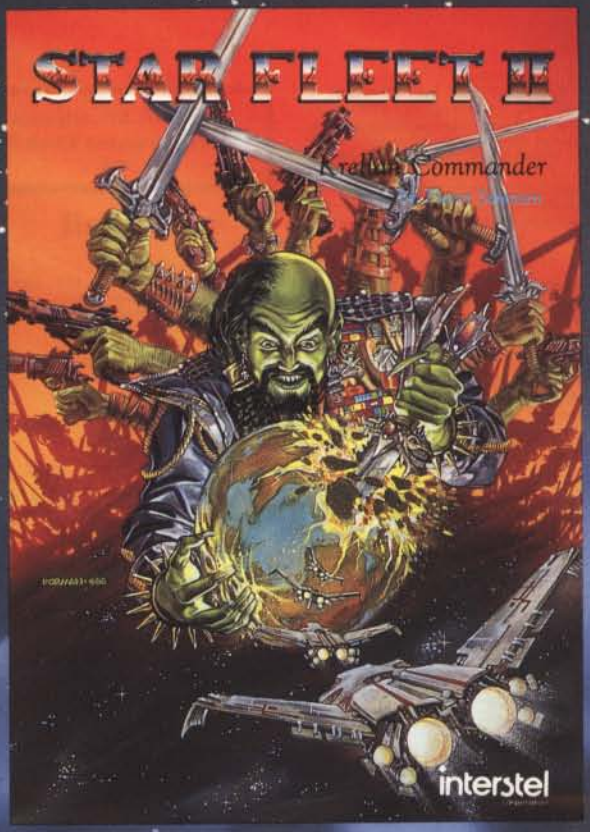




Once again the Alliance is being attacked by the tyrannical Krellan Empire. Even neutral planets are being scattered like cosmic dust. Alliance leaders, recently apprised of the Krellan's 'Operation Big Brother', are readying a special task force to try to unite each planet by forming a counter-empire.

EMPIRE-Wargame of the Century, from the STAR FLEET series of games, is a strategic simulation of global conflict, conquest, and empire building between two or three human or computer opponents. Starting with a single city, you must explore and conquer new territory, and produce the land, air, and sea forces needed to establish an empire. All your strategic skills are required, and there can be only one winner!

With multiple difficulty levels, over 30 commands, millions of different worlds to conquer (design your own!), permanent battle records, save/resume games in progress, play-by-mail feature.

Available 1987 for the Atari ST, IBM PC & Compatibles, and Amiga. Coming soon for the Apple II and others.

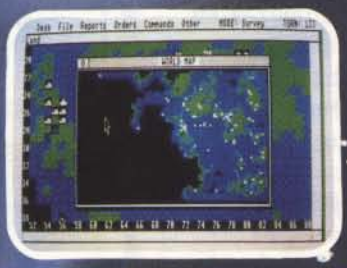
To safeguard the freedom of the galaxy, the Alliance has commissioned its toughest warriors and assembled its most sophisticated technology to date. As Krellan Commander, YOU can make them REGRET it!

In **STAR FLEET II-Krellan Commander**, second in the STAR FLEET series of advanced space strategy simulations, your mission is to explore the star systems of the United Galactic Alliance, looking for planets to conquer and Alliance warships to destroy. Your ships are equipped with the latest technology, and on board are detachments of the feared Krellan shock troops. At higher ranks, you command dozens of warships & a million combat-hardened warriors to bring the Alliance to it knees!

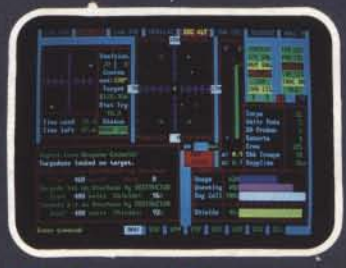
With 1,000 unique planets, over 10 different types of starships, 12 critical ship's systems, and 7 ranks and difficulty levels.

Available 1987 for the IBM PC & Compatibles, and Atari ST. Coming soon for the Apple II, Amiga, Atari, Commodore 64/128, and Macintosh.

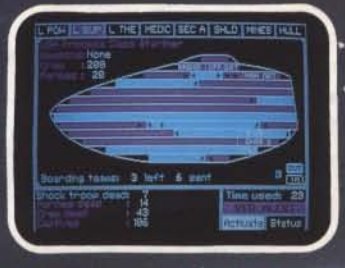
Convenient command windows help you build an empire.



World Map display shows extent of exploration & overall situation.



Main Command Screen of your Krellan Battlecruiser.



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